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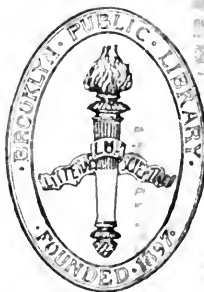
# The Life Superlative

STOPFORD · A · BROOKE

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE



THE  
LIFE SUPERLATIVE

BY  
STOPFORD A. BROOKE

BOSTON  
AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

1907

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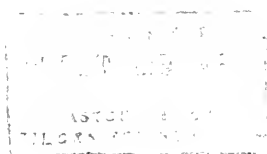
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*Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, H.A.*

REV. STOPFORD A. BROOKE

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

It is a difficult though an honourable task—if such words are applicable to a labour of love—for any one to write an introduction, however brief and inadequate, to a book by Mr. Stopford Brooke. The present writer would have much preferred to have remained silent in the presence of one of the most eloquent, fearless, and cultured of modern preachers, lest perchance he should break the spell which the pages that follow are certain to cast over the reader, by virtue of their moral outlook, their grasp of things unseen and eternal, their practical appeal, in no narrow sense, to all that is highest and best in human nature, and that high note of triumphant optimism which is only possible to the open

By way of  
Preface

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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By way of  
Preface

vision of faith. The poetic insight into the supreme realities of life and destiny, which is characteristic of the preacher, is not more conspicuous than his recognition of the problem of evil, the mystery of pain, and that subtle tendency to selfishness, which in us all, wars against the greatest thing we can covet—the Life Superlative.

But there is a reason why some one other than Mr. Brooke should write a few words, if only to say that he is not responsible either for the idea, the scheme, or the title of a volume which the great company of people of all classes who had been helped by his interpretation of life and religion, inspired in the personal quest of the chief good, and moved to practical action in the direction of civic righteousness, are sure to prize. When the idea of this little book was placed before Mr. Brooke he expressed his own misgivings, and only yielded when he was persuaded that for such a work there

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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was a strong desire on the part of many—  
widely scattered to-day—whose souls had  
been stirred and uplifted during the eighteen  
years when Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury,  
was in truth a quiet sanctuary where those  
who were weary, perplexed, and sometimes  
baffled, renewed their strength, and found  
once more the secret of courage.

By way of  
Preface

It only remains to add that Mr. Brooke gave to the compiler his manuscript sermons and addresses, together with not a few that were privately printed but not published. The selection which follows has been made by one who is conscious that the citations only imperfectly represent the wealth of material placed at his disposal. Another statement perhaps ought to be made. Mr. Brooke has been good enough not merely to read the passages chosen, but to revise, and in not a few cases to expand them.

S. J. R.



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# THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

## I

### *RELIGION AND CONDUCT*

THIS is a voice and a temptation which comes to all men. But it comes especially to those who by power or genius rule over the bodies or souls of others. "Give us," say the people, "material prosperity, riches, houses, food, comfort; and we will worship and obey." And many a ruler has yielded, and sacrificed the nobler to the baser nature of the people, buying an easy throne or a flattered premiership at the expense of the future honour, dignity, and force of his nation, beggaring the future by the expenditure of vast sums in the present that

"Command  
that these  
Stones be  
made  
Bread"

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**"Command  
that these  
Stones be  
made  
Bread"**

he may secure his place by involving those, who have the unquiet and noble thoughts of freedom, in the sloth of luxury and the passion of gain. "If they eat and drink and sleep," he says to himself, "and make wealth, if they live by bread alone, they will let me alone. Troublesome aspirations towards liberty, the disturbing ideas which are born of poverty and effort will not arise. My imperial throne, my seat in the government are then safe. I can lead my beast after me whither I will." There are those in history—and they are many—who have yielded to this temptation, and have made indeed their people into the animals of Circe's sty, rich, contented, sensual, lost to manhood, and in the end overwhelmed by a ruin as dreadful as that which fell upon imperial Rome.

But history is not without many rulers of men who have resisted the temptation in the spirit of Christ ; the principle of whose government has been this, "Man doth not live by bread alone."

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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These were rulers content, if need were, to forfeit place and power rather than enslave the future or hinder the moral progress of their people ; content to have their reward in the approval of the future ; resolved not to create a false prosperity for their subjects, but to found a free prosperity upon the basis of national greatness of soul ; to educate, in consistency with liberty, those manly qualities to which honour is dearer than wealth, and purity of life than splendour of life. It would be to degrade their people if they bribed them, if by a single appeal to their lower nature they could secure their power. They would not make, if they could, the stones of the desert into bread at once. They would not pauperise a nation by luxury. They come to inspire men to work, and by work alone to change the desert into a fruitful field, and its stones into bread. They do not take away the curse, "in the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread," but they change the curse into blessing by developing, through labour, the noble feeling,

"Command  
that these  
Stones be  
made  
Bread"

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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the high thought, the energy, the plain living, the resistance to evil, the love of good, which make the manhood of a great people.

**Drifting**      Life has to be fought out ! Where is your armour ? Your own path has to be hewn through its forest ! Where are your tools ? Work lies before you ! Where are your ideas for it, and where the high emotions which are to drive the ideas ? You will have to cling to your work like a limpet to the rock ! Where is your power, where your constancy, where your trained perseverance ? Temptation lies before you ! Where are your principles, where your fortitude in resistance and attack ? You will have to move among men, and to do your work among them and upon them ! Are you taking any pains to know them, learning anything about the human beings that surround you, winning the knowledge which will influence them, the gentleness and courtesy which will allure them. Hu-

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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manity is more interesting than any amuse- **Drifting**  
ment or any idleness, and it is only by know-  
ing men and women that you will learn to  
know yourself, and only when you have got  
some of this double knowledge, that you will  
be able to act with intelligence and use.  
And the drifter is doing nothing towards this  
—but the very contrary! He is allowing  
himself to remain so ignorant of men and  
so careless of himself, that hereafter, with  
the best intentions in the world, he will  
do nothing but blunder; and, desirous to  
do good, do harm. He will make many  
beginnings, but nothing will be completed.  
Unstable as water, he shall not excel;  
till, at last, having carried his drifting into  
old age, he will know that life has been  
a failure; and a grim companion is that  
knowledge as we pace the downward way.  
“I had powers,” he will say, “but I could  
not use them. I had opportunities, but I  
was always too late to seize them. I had  
work given me to do, but I never could say  
of even one piece of it—‘It is finished.’”

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Love and  
Jealousy

Love begins with the love of home. It passes on to the love of friends, then takes its personal form in passionate love of man and woman, then expands into the love of a society, then of a nation. From love of our own land and countrymen it spreads into the larger love of the human race; and finally, though this love has accompanied all the others, it ends in the love of God. But in this end it does not cease to expand, for God, being universal and all things and personalities being contained in Him, love finds, in this its end in Him, new beginnings, new objects, new powers; and passes onward rejoicing in an infinite expansion. Expansion, then, is an essential quality of love; and if, at any one point of this progress, love stays and isolates itself in domestic love or passionate love, in the love of nature or of art, in any love—it is then and there sinning against the law of its nature. This is the very thing which jealousy, or any inordi-



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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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nate claims for isolated love demand. They are therefore not love, but enemies of love. Love and  
Jealousy

It follows from this general statement that to attribute jealousy to God, in this isolating, claiming sense of the word, is to attribute to Him that which denies His nature, if His nature be love. Now, it is plain that the Jews, even among the prophets, did this very thing. They were always a jealous people, excessive in their claims, greedy of exclusive favours, indignant if any one shared in their special rights, crying out to God, "All or none; all is mine, and none must have it but I." No wonder they placed in the mouth of Jehovah a number of phrases like this: My glory will I not give to another.

But all that temper was abhorrent to Jesus, and one reason of His death was that His principles were destroying that temper. He took away from the Jews their exclusive right to the love of God, and opened that love to all the world.

Any so-called Christian, then, who confines

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Love and Jealousy

that love to his own sect or Church, who, jealous himself, makes God jealous, is a bigoted Jew and not a Christian in heart, and would, if the Son of Man were to come to-morrow on the earth, hound Him from the church or the chapel, and put Him out of the pale of salvation in the name of the Jewish God. That has been the practice of men of this temper in all ages. The Jews had some excuse. The higher truth of love had not been developed. But the religious persecutors, and we who condemn others, claiming God as only ours—we have but little excuse. The Light has shined upon us, but we love darkness rather than light, because our thoughts are jealous. As to those persons who excuse their own jealousy in the matter of personal love and friendship by the example of God in the Old Testament—and I have heard that audacity!—they are making God Himself the cloke of their sin, and their punishment is the moral degradation which follows on the worship of a degraded God.

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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Again, all kinds of horrors are imputed to God by this passion in the heart of man. He is said to be indignant with the depth of love which we give to our children, to our wife, to our lover, to our friends. It is robbing Him, we are told, of His rights, as if love had any rights. He is said to be angry with our devotion to work, to science, and to beauty. He is said to claim that we should love nothing but Him—that is, He is made to limit the out-goings of love ; the perfect Love He is, imprisons, fetters, circumscribes love ! Oh, what folly ! Does justice limit justice, or mercy, mercy ? The whole assertion is absurd. The truth at the root of these absurdities is—that we are to love all things *in* God, that is, within the circle of His character. No love that you can give to another can offend Him, if that love does not sin against love, that is, if our love does not limit the outgoings of love itself, or violate the righteousness which is the fruit of love of God. The deeper your love for child and husband and

Love and  
Jealousy

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Love and Jealousy

friend the better, if your love does not pervent you from loving others than those specially dear to you. No devotion you can give to any good or true work offends Him, if the devotion do not prevent the expansion of love—that is, if it do not sin against the essence of love. The whole thing lies in a nutshell; it is expressed when we are told to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; for we should also love our neighbour in the same manner.

### Righteous and Un- righteous Jealousy

Perfect love of God means the infinite expansion and variety of love, not its limitations; that is, at every point it means the opposite of jealousy. Nevertheless, there is a truth at the back of this theory of the jealousy of God, otherwise the theory would not have lasted. What is that truth? for to find it will further clear our view. The first part of the truth is this, “That God declares that all love must

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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be coincident with righteousness," that is, **Righteous and Un-righteous Jealousy** that we must never do what is wrong for the sake of love. This is the meaning of the phrase of Jesus, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." Whoever, for the sake of earthly love, surrenders duty, is false to his conscience, or violates purity or justice ; he is not a lover of God. All earthly passion must yield to, and limit itself by, righteousness. If that is jealousy—then God is jealous ! But it is not jealousy in the common sense of the word. It asks nothing for self ; it defends that which is precious to the whole universe ; it defends the righteousness which makes all that is in the world worthy of love ; it defends the goodness without which there could be no security for love. Nay, it defends love itself from satiety ; for love which has lost righteousness, no matter how passionate it be, finally loses its savour.

That this divine care for righteousness in love has no resemblance to our jealousy

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Righteous  
and Un-  
righteous  
Jealousy

is proved by this—that doing of wrong for the sake of love is one of the most frequent claims of our jealousy. Men and women are called on by those who love them jealously to give up the kindnesses they are doing to another, to isolate themselves from their family and their friends, to lay by their work, to be false to themselves, to be unjust to the just desire of others. The claim God makes when we love Him is the direct opposite of this selfishness. He asks us to love Him in such a way as would render it impossible for us to do any of these wrongs.

Again, this divine care not only for righteousness in love, but for its infinite expansion, defends the very existence of love. And the proof of that is—that whenever, prompted by the passion of jealousy or by the passion of love, we are lured into doing wrong for the sake of our love, our love itself is spoiled. We have seen this a hundred times. Personal love, selfish love, jealous love, love which leads us to sin, ends

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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in the departure of love; in boredom, in anger, in despair, in misery, in the loss of romance, in hatred. One of the most piteous things in this world is the slow decay of love into disillusion. When God, then, claims that love should always be hand-in-hand with righteousness, and with its own expansion, the claim is made in order that love should not be spoiled, diseased and die.

**Righteous  
and Un-  
righteous  
Jealousy**

Again, God defends the very existence of love by insisting that it should not admit into it any element which lessens or destroys its power of expansion. Earthly jealousy, the jealousy so much praised by some, does limit the range of love; its very essence is to deny the expansion of love. It declares that no other affection can be admitted to share with personal love. It forbids friendship, social interests, even the remembrance of affection. "All must be given to me, me only." And it is this which, passing into the realm of theology, has imposed that cry on God. But this

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Righteous  
and Un-  
righteous  
Jealousy

is the very thing that God abhors ; first because, in limiting love, it destroys love, whose very essence is illimitable ; and, secondly, because love, absorbed in one person, neglects humanity, neglects all its higher duties, and is ruined. To save the very life of love God forbids its limitation. The isolating cry of jealousy replaces love by absolute selfishness. It is the miser's cry, the miser's greed, " Let me have everything in my love to lay by and keep and gloat over, to roll my heart in its gold, and never let it pass out of my possession."

Faithful-  
ness—Law-  
ful and  
Unlawful  
Claims

There is one of the claims of jealousy which it alleges in self-defence, " I only want one matter, faithfulness. Surely, I am right in claiming that." If that is all, and it is a great thing if, when we love and are loved, we only desire to keep our love untainted by falsehood within its proper sphere ; to have its honour clear ; truth to



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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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its promise unbroken ; the special passion which belongs to special love not given to another ; righteousness and truth in the marriage of two hearts ; then that is a lawful claim. And we may judge of its lawfulness by asking what results follow on a violation of it, on the breaking up of this faithfulness. Violation of it not only spoils the special love, it creates a disbelief in all love. It stains the very thought of love, it blackens its ideal, it disenchants all friendship, it may turn loving men and women, for a time, into haters of their race ; it goes further, and turns them into disbelievers in God.

Faithful-  
ness—  
Lawful and  
Unlawful  
Claims

But then the question must be clearly answered, "What do you mean by faithfulness? Is the claim to it unlimited, does it extend itself beyond the bounds of justice?" We know that, for the most part, jealousy does not stop within those limits. It declares that faithfulness means no thought of another, no interest taken in

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Faithful-  
ness—Law-  
ful and  
Unlawful  
Claims

another, no feeling of any kind for another ; no friendship, no devotion beyond the circle where two live together ; no deep love given even to children, to brother or sister or mother ; no profound delight and interest in special work in which the other cannot share. This, it says, is faithfulness, and the existence of any of these other forms of love, unfaithfulness.

Then the claim is disallowed. Love is, then, limited to one form of it, and this is a sin against the whole idea of love. Nay, it turns it into an odious selfishness, into the opposite of love. It prevents its expansion ; it prevents its duties being done ; it defrauds man of our work and our affection ; it renders those who make the claim, or those who yield to it, incapable of knowing and believing in God. All is ruined ; and the punishment is that the exclusive love itself, and the mutual passion are destroyed. There is no swifter slaughterer of passionate love than craving jealousy.

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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There is also a craving, greedy friendship, especially between women, which asks that it should have all the affection of another given up to it, save that which belongs to domestic or personal love; and it thinks it is especially good because it excludes that region. But outside of that, it wants all; and this craving want is shown not so much in an actual demand of all (for jealousy does not like to betray itself), as in an uneasiness, an irritation of the whole temper of life, a querulous claim for attention, a brooding air which wishes to be noticed whenever our friend is occupied with an old friend or is taken up with a new one. Sometimes it even goes further, and says openly, "No friend but me: I will have all."

Friendship  
and  
Jealousy

There should be a specialty given and received by each. Something distinctive, that is, something that recognises the individual character of a friend; but if another specialty is bestowed on another

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Friendship  
and  
Jealousy

friend, what right has the first to object, to limit the expansion of friendship? There is no such right.

There should be faithfulness, that is, the friendship should not be taken away, the special element in it should be retained. No other friendship should lessen that element, as long as the friendship is kept. But if our demand for faithfulness is taken to mean what it never should mean—no other friendship, no other interests, no greater friendship than that given to us—it is a base demand, the demand of selfish and horse-leech jealousy. It wearies and irritates those on whom the demand is made; it consumes the heart of the demander, and turns friendship into gall. Then the love of friendship flies into empty space: “When I am in chains,” cries love, “I break them and fly away.” And it is religiously right. It is defending its expansion, defending its essence, defending itself as it exists in God.

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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Covetousness does not care much for show and self-indulgence, but for accumulation; and its spirit is the greatest curse which can afflict a nation or a person. It is the sin of the whole world, and England shares in it too much, politically and privately. It is the root of all our division, when, above all things, we want unity between class and class; it sharpens the fierce war between labour and capital; it keeps back the bettering of society and of the poor; it makes our foreign wars. If you wish to help the future, let your life be one long, steady, wise protest against covetousness in word and deed. Refuse to accumulate more than a just competence; enough to let your children have a fair chance to win by honest work their own competence. Accustom yourself, accustom them, to giving, not to keeping. Kindle in them such thoughts and emotions, beyond their home, towards mankind their brother, towards all great national and worldwide

Covetous-  
ness

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Covetous- ness

causes, that they will never be able to accumulate, because their high enthusiasm for these aims will urge them into giving.

That will bless the future. You will have done vital good to the coming years of this century. Your children, your friends, your workmen, your mates in labour, filled with your temper of soul, will hand on the true life, the uniting power, the glory of love ; and if a great crisis should come in our history, those who have been thus trained, in whom such powers move, will be the salvation of the land.

### The Abuse of Wealth

All wealth is not for the possessor of it, but for humanity ; and the special idea of the life of the rich man, as long as he exists in society, is to promote the movement and distribution of all wealth, his own in the first place, for the sake of the welfare and progress of mankind. This movement and distribution of wealth is part of the work which God has given man to do in this

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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world, and certain men have the genius for getting wealth out of natural capital, and are at present secured in the possession of all they can attain by law. Most of them—so extraordinarily is their gift and God's intention in their having it perverted—imagine that they have this cleverness for their own use; and that when they win wealth by it, they have a right to use that wealth in any way they like; to expend it wastefully, or to accumulate it carefully, for themselves. Legally, they have at present any amount of right; but we are not talking here of legal rights, but of right and wrong in the eyes of God and humanity.

The Abuse  
of Wealth

In the eyes of these great judges, the man with the gift for winning wealth who uses his winnings in these fashions, is one of the worst of sinners. He has degraded his powers and himself, and in doing so has directly or indirectly injured and maimed the human race. The law does not take away his wealth from him. On the con-

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## THE LIFE <sup>OF</sup> SUPERLATIVE

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**The Abuse  
of Wealth**

trary, it secures him its possession, and rightly so, as long as society is constituted as it is at present ; but if it be attained by tyrannous use of capital, or kept unproductive, or made productive for self alone, or flung away in waste—his wealth is a curse to himself, his family, the society and the nation in which he lives. Every shilling of it is stained with blood, rusted with the misery and poverty of others, bought at the expense of loss of leisure, loss of comfort, loss of happiness, loss of education, loss of life to others. For it men are slaved to death, and women driven to shame. For every hour of its waste, many have died ; for every day of its selfish hoarding, men, women, and children are overworked into the workhouse, the police court, the sweater's den, and the grave.

This is the price, and were judgment given now by a clerk sent from heaven, it would be given as Portia gave it to Shylock when he had contrived against the life of a citizen : “ May I not have my own—as I like it ? ”



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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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cry these modern Shylocks. "Yes," the clerk from heaven answers; "take and keep your money. The law of earth allows it; the courts of earth give you your property." "O righteous judge!" the accumulating capitalist answers. "O excellent young man!" replies the possessor of vast hereditary wealth who spends it only on his own property. "O noble judge!" cries the spendthrift. "Come," they call aloud to tenant, to workman, to the poor, the profits of whose labour they take and do not distribute, "a sentence; come, prepare—the pound of your flesh, next your heart."

**The Abuse  
of Wealth**

No court on earth says nay, but were equity done on these, there would be heard another sentence from the heavenly clerk.

"Take then thy pound; but, in the cutting of it, if thou dost shed one drop of human blood, or cause one human tear, thy lands and goods are, by the laws of Heaven, confiscated unto the estate of Humanity." And the time will come when that will be the

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Abuse  
of Wealth

voice of the human race in judgment on the selfish and wasteful rich, and the sentence of Heaven be ratified in the laws of earth.

Self-  
Interest of  
the Wealthy

England by its representatives has little notion of large expenditure for the welfare of the people. It expends, on the other hand, enormous sums for wars. If wars are necessary for the security of the empire. I have nothing to say against such expenditure. But that other expenditure for the welfare of the people ought not to be, as it is, avoided or ignored. It is just as necessary; it is often more necessary. When the mightiest foes of the human race declare war against masses of our population, when disease and dirt and cold and starvation and drink and bad living are sent by our final enemy Death against us, and wound, slay and torture thousands on thousands every year, till, could we but see it, England is like a hideous battle-field;

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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no one dreams of advising an additional penny to be added to the income-tax for the purpose of keeping these foes at bay, and finally of defeating them. And a greater absurdity does not exist in the whole world than this omission, nor a greater economical folly. But the fact is, these enemies wage their most deadly war on folk who do not count for much in the opinion of the wealthier classes : on the outcasts in big towns, on the men, women, and children who suffer and make no noise, on the lower ranges of the city and agricultural poor, on those who live on the edge of starvation and death. Any amount of money is forthcoming when the interests of people who have money are concerned, when the expenditure brings a return to the capitalist ; but to vote large sums for scientific investigation of the causes and therefore of the remedies of disease, for providing in proper quantities the absolute necessities of life, water, air, light, distribution of good food, decent dwellings : to do this for those who

**Self-  
Interest of  
the Wealthy**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Self-  
Interest of  
the Wealthy

all their lives are fighting for very life, that is inconceivable by our legislature !

The  
Unloving

There is a poverty far worse than the want of the goods of the earth. It is, the want of noble emotion for noble things; the want of love, and therefore of the pursuit of ideals which are beyond our present reach; the want of the power of seeing beauty, of admiring it, or of loving it if seen; the want of imagination; inability to reverence, to admire, to enjoy; the poverty which is the absence of those capacities whereby we are ravished out of self and its desires into the worlds which are beyond all knowledge; those high and noble regions where dwell ideas and their forms which many call unreal, but which are, in reality, the substance of the shadow-world in which we think we live. This is a terrible poverty, and it pervades all classes. It is at the root of the fashionable pessimism of to-day. If these

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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unhappy creatures really loved the beautiful, their life would be full of joy, nor would it lose any sympathy with sorrow. This is a poverty which prevails largely among scientific people who are proud of their knowledge, who think it a fine thing to decry emotion, and to cling to what they call facts. It has seized on a great mass of women whose souls, and the use of whose lives to mankind, have been choked by their belief that the intellect alone is the judge of what is true, as if intellect, unbalanced by the high emotions, was not the very prince of deceivers. This is a poverty which belongs to the people who live for money, and in and about the purlieus of money. It belongs as much to that unhappy set of folk who seek excitement in complex and invented pleasure, in the pursuit of what the popular voice calls fashion; who, knowing nothing of the supreme joys of young imagination, reverence and love, try to satisfy their aimless desires in pleasures which are proved not

The  
Unloving

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The  
Unloving**

to be pleasures by the satiety which instantly besets them. This, in all its forms, is the worst poverty which besets the modern world.

Who will bring to these good tidings of great joy, who will deliver these spirits in prison, who will clothe these beggars, who will feed these starving souls, who will persuade them that they are poor and miserable and blind and naked and sick to death? For alas! till they are convinced that they are wretched, there is but little chance of their redemption.

For them indeed the spirit of the life of Jesus is as much needed as it is for those who are overwhelmed in the prison of sin. Their want may in truth be called a spiritual want. It is the want of love, of the one thing needful. Whoever loves knows not only righteousness, he knows also what is lovely. Whoever loves knows that knowledge and the excellent things of the intellect are good, but that life may be beautiful and useful without them. Who-

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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ever loves knows that money, and the ambitions of the world, fashion, and fame, are dust and ashes in comparison with the world of beauty which lies open before a heart which, like that of Jesus, lived in love. What need had He of any richer life than that of a poor wanderer on the hills and by the lake, what need had He of wealth, what need of fame or fashion among the leaders of the Jewish or the Roman world, what need of science or the whirl of business? Immortal joy was always with Him in the midst of pain, immortal beauty companied His steps, His daily life was perennial pleasure. Because He loved, He was happy, and all places were happy to Him; the simplest things rose into the greatest, the daily life of man supplied Him with the means of revelation; the glory of God was His home.

The  
Unloving

Many discussions, many fears have arisen round the saying of Jesus concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost. The explana-

The Sin  
against the  
Holy Ghost

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Sin  
against the  
Holy Ghost

tion of it is to be found, where few have looked for it, in the circumstances which preceded the saying, and to which it was applied.

A good deed had been done, a deed of pure love. A poor, diseased and helpless creature had been restored to a sound mind and body, and brought back out of darkness into light and life. Every one who was there rejoiced and thought the deed from God who loved and would heal the wretched. But one did not, and he was the representative of a whole class. He, because he hated the man who did the good thing, looked on the deed, and said it was not good ; it was devilish, and done by the devil's power. 'He casteth out devils by Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.' He saw love, and he said it came out of hate. He saw goodness and he called it evil. As far as his influence reached, he was persuading men that the loving, the pitiful, and the pure were absolute wickedness ; and this he did to discredit the man who had done the



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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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deed, and to keep power in the hands of his class. What was this? It was striking a deadly blow at the sense of goodness and love among men; it was upturning the very foundations of right and wrong; it was making good into evil, and God into the devil. What state of heart was that? It was one which, owing to envy and greed of spiritual power, had lost all sense of goodness and love, and saw them as evil, and saw also evil as good. The spirit of good in man was attacked and condemned as evil. The Spirit of God Himself was said to be evil and not good.

**The Sin  
against the  
Holy Ghost**

This is the sin against the Holy Spirit. It is calling good evil and evil good, and believing that one is right in doing so. It is a state of heart in which love is seen as hate, and purity as impurity, and justice as injustice, and truth as a lie, and God as a devil. It was the state of heart which drove this agent of the Pharisees, and the Pharisees themselves for the sake of their power, to call the loving acts and life of Jesus, the acts

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Sin  
against the  
Holy Ghost**

and the life of one who was the servant of the fiend ; and there can be conceived no state of heart which is more ruined than this, and which brings greater injury upon mankind. It is plainly the worst of sins, for in it goodness is turned into sin. Alas ! there are none who have been more guilty of it than those who are called religious and moral men ; they have almost a monopoly of it. Driven by desire to keep their accursed power over the minds and consciences of men, hating those who do not go with their opinions, in envy of those who, outside of their creeds, do good and shake their influence, determined to trample them down and persecute them ; they have in all ages called good evil, and represented God as on their side ; and in so doing have again and again made a devilish and idolatrous image of God, and done the blackest of wrongs to the human race. God and man they have alike injured with the darkest of injuries.

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## RELIGION AND CONDUCT

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Such a state of heart is one which is incapable of receiving forgiveness. It is not that it could not be forgiven—that is, that God is not ready to forgive it—but it is, that as long as it lasts, it cannot receive or understand what is good, for all that is good seems evil to it. Hence its unforgiveability is not a capricious chastisement of it. It is in the reason of things; it is in accordance with simple law that forgiveness cannot come to it. “What have I to be forgiven?” it asks. “I am good; all that you offer to me as good, all that you call love and justice and goodness, I call wicked. I will not have it.” It is plain while that state lasts, in this age, or in that to come, there is no forgiveness possible; and one observes that those who are afflicted with it here on earth end by becoming of an astonishing hardness of heart. Nothing seems to touch them. They cannot see goodness or love in their opponents, though all the world sees it. They

**The Limits  
of For-  
giveness**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Limits  
of For-  
giveness**

have a special faculty in representing God as a demon, as one who shares in their hatred and violence and cruelty. It is a dreadful and piteous condition, and one into which we are all, unless we watch ourselves carefully, liable to fall. The sin against the Holy Spirit is ever at our doors.

## II

### *LESSONS BY THE WAY*

IN the most burdensome life, when there is love, there is joy and hope, and this was the happiness of Christ. It was His habit to press contentment on men. He insists incessantly upon contentment in all matters save those which belong to moral conduct and spiritual aspiration. He drew picture after picture of the covetous and ambitious, of selfish, vain, and careful men and of their misery and folly ; He urged a life which did not complain or mourn, but sought, kindled by faith in God and hope, to awake the languid and to heal the mourner. And such a life He lived Himself. He kept poor, lived from day to day ; He never sought for wealth, avoided social eminence, refused the kingdom offered to

Unsearch-  
able Riches

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Unsearch-  
able Riches

Him. Though suffering, He never complained ; though misunderstood, He was never querulous ; though He knew the fate that hung over Him, He never thought Himself ill-treated by God. He had neither the laborious discontent of covetousness or ambition, nor the inactive discontent of melancholy. But He had the steady restlessness of noble human work, of moral conduct.—“ I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day.” And He had a hunger and thirst, in His human life, for communion with His Father. Between this absence of discontent in worldly things, and this impassioned energy for goodness and God, lay His quiet daily life, content with all the elements of simple humanity, and the human life that arose from them ; content with the beauty of the world that God had made, and seeing in it the wonders of God’s character—and both contentments were whole worlds apart from riches.

They were not only without money and

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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without price ; they could not be had by those who cared for money. They were without cares, mean anxieties. querulous joys, lifeless selfishness ; because, beyond Himself, in the grass of the field and the splendour of the flower, He saw His Father's beauty and was uplifted thereby out of all evil mournfulness ; because, beyond Himself, He saw the suffering of the world, and was uplifted thereby into that realm of compassion and love in which self is lost ; because, beyond Himself, He saw in the love, faith, hope, purity, and battle of man for good, the mighty and glorious end of these things in God, who inspired them into Man. And when, seeing the glorious close, confident of the victory that shall fall in the end to the lot of humanity, He was swept wholly out of Himself even to dying upon the Cross for love, He rejoiced in the midst of the deepest human sorrow with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Unsearch-  
able Riches

These were the wondrous things He saw with eyes opened by Love, and we may

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Unsearch- able Riches

also see them if, with one of those mighty efforts of which the soul is capable, we break loose from the covetous life and rise into the life of love. "Open thou mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things in Thy law."

### Man's Atoning Work

Whenever any man has been loving, unselfish, forgiving, faithful to justice, he has made, however unconsciously, his brother men feel that God is of the same temper. He has revealed the character of God, and brought men to love it ; and, in doing so, he has changed the character of men from evil to good. He has wrought an atonement.

It is one of our most benign and blessed works to do the same. We can, by being Christ, by living His life after Him, do also His atoning work. We reconcile men to God, when we show forth God in our lives. If we love men, we make men believe that God is Love. They see God in us, and seeing Him are delighted, lured, and drawn to Him ;



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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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and when they realise Him through loving Him in us, they pass onwards into love of Him alone—for Himself alone—and, loving Him, are changed into His image. This is the redeeming, atoning work we may do, and it represents exactly the atoning work which Christ did in perfection. This is to be the mediator in the true sense of the word—to be ourselves Christ, to do His work, and yet to feel that it is not we but Christ in us who is the power of redemption. That is no theological dream, no unhuman doctrine, but the simple declaration of facts which every one can see if but the eye is set to look for them. It is at once the explanation and the proof of the Atonement.

Man's  
Atoning  
Work

It is our work as peacemakers, as a nation that follows Christ. It is our work as individual members of the English nation to labour to spread far and wide the atoning and reconciling thought that true national religion is this—that each nation should work, not only for its own special interests, or be jealous for its own honour as duellists

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Man's  
Atoning  
Work

are jealous, but labour for the interests of other nations as much as for its own, and be jealous for the just rights of other nations as much as for its own ; that nothing should ever be done in the present by one nation for its own interests which might in the future put into jeopardy the freedom, the advance, or the individuality of another nation ; that, in one word, all that we call so falsely national glory, which means making our military power to conquer respected, should be subordinated to the true glory, which means making our power to do and support the right and just thing, loved ; that all that we call national prosperity and pre-eminence must be systematically subordinated—and this should be the foundation of all foreign politics—to the interest of the whole of mankind. Till that is done, our Christianity may be personal, but it is not national ; and till it is done, we shall never have our rights in the only way worth having them ; we shall never gain our true interests, nor realise our true

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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honour. It is only half Christianity to worship God revealed in Christ. We must add to it the service of mankind in Christ.

**Man's  
Atoning  
Work**

It is in your power to do a great deal towards that noble consummation. It is in your power, year by year (for year by year such questions rise in English politics), to support by voice and writing, in society, at home, and in your business, the view which regulates our policy abroad on the moral grounds of justice, of love of freedom, of hatred of oppression, of hatred of grasping wars and grasping trade, and to decry and abhor the selfishness and the petty frenzies which, under the cry of England's honour, hide the principles and the passions of the duellist and the savage.

**The Power  
that is  
in us**

The desire to get more, or the desire to keep what we have unjustly won, is the very antagonist of the Spirit of Christ ; the source of all hatred, and cruelty, and violence ; the source of nine-tenths of the wars and

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Power  
that is  
in us**

wickedness of the world. It is as evil in nations as it is in men.

Stand against covetousness; have the heart, as members of a great nation and not only at home or among your friends, to live in the Spirit of Christ Jesus; for, to care for the whole more than for ourselves, to love and to die for the great things of justice, freedom, love, pity, truth—is to be the maker of peace, one of the great atoning band who shall at last see all nations atoned together, bound together by mutual self-surrender into the glorious humanity that Christ shall present to God when the harvest of the world is ripe.

**The  
Spiritual  
Observance  
of the Day  
of Rest**

It is founded on the fact that man's spirit requires rest, and that this rest is only to be found in finding God. If a man has found God as a constant presence, and can truly say that all time is holy to him, he is freed from the observance of any particular day. But though freed, he does not rashly make

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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use of his freedom. He knows the weakness of man, and lest he should insensibly lose spirituality, he supports and stimulates it by the observance of form.

**The  
Spiritual  
Observance  
of the Day  
of Rest**

But for those who cannot as yet realise this daily Presence of God so that every hour is a spiritual Sabbath, the dedication of one day in the week, not only to mental and bodily repose, but also to recalling God as the only rest of the hunger of the spirit, and the use of certain religious observances for that purpose—is as important as it is necessary. For in our life here, the noise of business or of pleasure is so loud, and worldly occupations so engrossing, that we are in constant danger of forgetting God altogether, of letting slip away the thought that we do not live for this world alone. It is the Sabbath which breaks this monotony of worldly life and recalls us to a higher life. And as long as there is a life of God, which is our true goal ; as long as He is seeking us to give rest to our souls ; as long as devotion and humility, thankfulness, meekness, hope,

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The  
Spiritual  
Observance  
of the Day  
of Rest

faith and love belong to the nature of man ; as long as the life of these divine qualities is kept up by the praise of God, and drawn forth from Him by prayer ; so long the blessedness of keeping one day not only for physical repose, but holy to the Lord, can never be destroyed. As long as we have any spiritual wants, we ought to seclude one day for giving them their food.

And, indeed, this spiritual observance is good in another way as rest to us. For as six days are devoted chiefly to the work of this world, it is a change in the conditions of life to give a good part of the seventh day to distinctly spiritual thought and feeling, and any change of condition which is not painful rests the whole nature. It brings to us a real good to have a new portion of our being awakened and set to work ; it gives repose to the other faculties which are over-worked, and which, just because they are over-worked, we are inclined to go on working. It prevents that tyranny which our ordinary work is too liable to exercise

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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over us, so that we become men of only one or two ideas, half developed, or developed too largely on one side. It changes the current of thought and feeling, bids us lay by on the shelf the grosser cares of life, and enter a country where the air is fresher, and the desires nobler, where around us blows not the dull winds of the city, or the heavy atmosphere of fashionable pleasure, but the breeze of eternity, through the sunlight of God's smile, upon our heart. To keep one day holy to the Lord changes the conditions of life, and in so doing rests the whole man.

**The  
Spiritual  
Observance  
of the Day  
of Rest**

Who told you the talent was your own ? It is not yours, and no greater mistake can be made in life than this imagination. To start your life on the lines of that belief is to endanger the use of your life ; to continue on those lines is to destroy it. Your gifts, your powers, are not your own ; they are trusts you have to use for God and man. To

**The  
Neglects  
Talent**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The  
Neglected  
Talent

fear to lose them proves that you have no notion of what you really are, and why are you here. These powers *yours*! You will have to drive that idea out, reform and re-organise every single conception you have of life before you can be worth anything in the world; and then, when you are convinced that all you have is yours only on trust for use for men, you will not fear to lose your gifts by spending them. You will know that spending is the use of gifts, and hoarding, their abuse; and when you have spent them, and spent them hoping for nothing again, there is a glorious surprise in wait for you—for you find that they are not lost, but doubled. When you have drained dry the fountain of love within and think you have no more to give, the fountain, when your love is again called upon, is twice as full as before of living water. When you have poured out your human sorrow or joy into music or into song that men may learn to feel as you have felt; when you have thrown all



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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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you have felt for years of silent pleasure in the woods among the hills or by the sea, upon the canvas, or into the poem, that men may learn to love and have delight in beauty—have you lost your power? No, doubled it! Greater is your passion, deeper your pleasure, higher your aim, richer your imagination, swifter, easier, more human, more victorious your creative hand. “Lord,” you cry, “Thy pound hath gained five pounds.”

**The  
Neglected  
Talent**

Moreover, if we did lose our gift in spending it, we ought to have the heart to lose it rather than the cowardice to keep it. What if we lose it? Another would win it, and if the other were made happy by it, what greater reward need we ask in life? It is not often we have the glorious chance of making another supremely happy, and if we get the chance, and do no wrong to truth in taking it—why, let us fling everything aside to seize it! This would

**Receiving  
by Losing**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Receiving  
by Losing

be the great acceptance, not the great refusal, of the call of Jesus—"Occupy till I come."

There are many who, looking back upon their lives, see that for years they have done little more than receive. At their feet, into their hands, love from all sides has poured its gifts. They have claimed it to the full, and their claim has been allowed. Let them remember, ere it be too late, to give back all the love they have taken, and to give it back tenfold, with thoughtful watchfulness, delicate care, with, it may be, repentant tenderness for having received so much and returned so little. They have been happy in being loved. If they would be blessed, let them live by the words of Jesus—"It is more blessed to give than to receive." For there is a danger that such men and women should, from the habit of so much receiving, lose slowly the habit of giving, and begin, as age creeps on, to get a little slothful—or, from the lavishness of love given, to be a little careless of spending it

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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on others ; or to imagine even that their gracious receiving is as good as giving—so that they finally end in laying all that has been given them by, wrapt up for pleasant contemplation at intervals ; but never used, never occupied, never felt to be a trust given them for the use of those who loved them, and for the whole world. If we have been greatly loved, we should be great spenders of love. To fear to lose it if we spend it, to have no heart to risk its loss—that is unworthiness. We have not then deserved the love we have won ; or if we have deserved it, we are ceasing to deserve it. And swift and inevitable is the punishment ; for all we have laid by decays, and all enjoyment of it dies. Never, then, through the commonness of receiving, lose the temper and the activity of giving. It is a real danger of which I warn those who are much loved. Keep to the end the heart which has no fear of giving and spending, which does not ask—“How much shall I lose if I give ?” If others win what we spend, what matter !

Receiving  
by Losing

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Receiving  
by Losing

There is life and joy in spending all we have. There is none in laying it up in a napkin.

The Con-  
querors of  
Peace

There is a brightness within which he may have who lives among men and in his work, and yet whose aims are above the aims of the world ; who has ideals and labours for them ; whose high ends are those which his youth conceived for love of men—ends which have no selfishness in them, but, on the contrary, keep him day by day close to the altar of sacrifice ; who, in the secret of his heart, holds himself the servant of righteousness and love, and rules his life thereby ; who is not alone within, for God is with him, and God is his dearest friend ; who cares for nothing—of trouble, or sorrow, or earthly loss, or blame, or praise—if only this divine friend and he are one ; who sees all men as the children of the Father, and therefore can labour for them with a victorious faith ; who knows that in God not one grain of his

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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labour can be lost ; who looks beyond the trouble of the earth to the vision of all humanity redeemed by perfect love ; who has no fear of death, for death is greater nearness to the everlasting life. This man knows what is the peace of sacred joy within !

The Con-  
querors of  
Peace

The power of this peace passes into his outward life, and passes from him into the lives of other men. He has that grace of happy playfulness in good fortune, of delicate gaiety in pain and sickness, of a brightness in ill-fortune, which inspires and kindles the broken-hearted of the earth. He does not only conquer ; he makes others conquerors. When dreadful pain or trouble falls on him, and all that he loved is turned into a desert, he loses neither heart nor hope ; but going down into the depths of his distress, overcomes the evil of his sorrow by faith in God, sets his feet upon a rock, and takes up the daily burden with cheerfulness—happy in victory, trouble beneath his feet like the dust on the highway, and

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Con-  
querors of  
Peace

the youth of the eternal life to which he goes already begun in his heart. It is a resurrection, and all life is new, newer than it was in youth; full of experience, and yet fresh as morning. And work? it is now nothing but delight. It is no fancy which has drawn this picture; it is more than possible. It has been more than realised a thousand times. But it needs God, and it needs the faith of immortality for all mankind.

This is accomplished manhood, accomplished womanhood, victorious, labouring, ideal, and rejoicing. And then old age is near. As it comes on it is half dreaded, for it seems the removing of power. When desire dies, we think that the fire of life dies with it. But these things are not so when God is within, when the deepening of the inward life prophesies immortal life. There is a change, but it is a change towards a profounder happiness. A wonderful peace begins; for the noise of life is over in old age, its temptations dead, its

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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troubles no more trouble. They have all been changed into inward powers. The cares of life are cast on God, for He careth for us. All is quiet, and we say to ourselves (and it is both prayer and praise), "He has made the storm a calm, and the waves thereof are still." In the silent house of age we know the meaning of "God with us." Our communion with Him, as of a Father with a child, is so close to His infinite life that in the winter of age we walk through the spring-tide of childhood, young again with Him who is never old.

**The Con-  
querors of  
Peace**

The best way to live in behalf of the future is to live in the present close to the character of God, and the principles of the life of Christ, for the sake of our fellowmen. God is eternal justice, truth, righteousness, mercy, and these are all held in His Love. Let your will be ruled by these powers, your inward thoughts and feelings be in accord

**The Secret  
of True  
Living**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Secret  
of True  
Living**

with them, your outward life manifest them, and you will kindle, ennoble, and advance the future.

The main idea of the life of Christ was that God had sent Him to save and heal mankind. That was the work the Father had given Him to do. And He did it to the death. God has sent us on the same mission ; to save the world, each of us our own little world, from bodily, mental, and spiritual evil. We are to be redeemers like our Master. No matter what our business be, we can save men, women, and children if we choose to do that work. No one can justly get rid of that divine imperative. Every man has a thousand opportunities of doing its work in private and public life. On its being done the future depends. And at no time do I remember a greater opportunity than is now afforded us. A mighty movement which will deeply engage the home politics of this country is rising slowly into increasing force towards the saving of men from preventible misery



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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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and moral evil ; and we ought to prepare ourselves, in the following of Christ, in self-sacrificing love, to take an eager and practical part in it. Live to be Saviours and Healers of men. Every hour of the future will then be bettered by your work ; and in your own soul there will be joy, and peace, and the self-forgetfulness of love.

**The Secret  
of True  
Living**

Have no more care than is necessary for the visible, the transient, and the material. We ought to live for invisible and divine ideas ; for the permanent in thought and emotion ; for the things of the soul which moth and rust cannot corrupt, which no thief, not even Death, can take away from us.

**Simplicity  
of Life**

We care too much, both poor and rich, each in his own way, for making a show, for luxury, for self-indulgence, for lazy ease that only remembers self. This is the temper which consumed the greatness of

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Simplicity  
of Life

Egypt, Assyria, and Rome; these evil Powers are the conquerors who have overthrown the vastest empires of the world. It was not the Goths who conquered Rome, or the Germans that overthrew the French. Their enemies were within their own borders.

Be it yours, then, in behalf of the future, to exercise simplicity of life. Plain living and high thinking are at the root of private and national greatness of character. "Enough, and no more"—that should be our motto. "Give us this day our daily bread"—that should be our prayer. To spend without thought, to live to accumulate, to live in idle self-indulgence, is to make every noble thought grow cold, to relax the conscience, to dull the imagination, to hamper every effort for humanity, to exile God from the heart, and to hand on to the future not only this base example, but children with minds set in this degraded key, with bodies puny and ill-bred, alike unfit for the works of war or the business of peace. Would that

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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their evil died with them ! But it does not. To the third and fourth generation their mean conception of life influences their nation to its degradation.

Simplicity  
of Life

It is our best happiness to stand fast for the great ideas and their accordant emotions, by whose prevalence the high progress of mankind into harmony with God's character is guided ; to be true to those noble causes by whose victory man is made great, and grows still greater. The support of these ideas and causes makes a nation glorious, and, beyond the nation, adds light and life to the whole world. Stand fast for unbribable justice and its doing ; for truth in business, in politics, in science, in art, literature, law, and religion ; for honesty in work, for pity of the oppressed and heavy-laden, and for sacrifice of self to save them ; for civil and religious freedom in the world, for the common rights and duties of all men ; for the equal

The Majesty  
of Fidelity

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Majesty  
of Fidelity

opportunities of all men and women, and for their full development.

Contend and labour for these high aims at home and abroad. If you only contend for them at home, only in your own work—you will lose them. They decay and die, unless they are expanded. Wherever freedom struggles towards life, wherever justice meets injustice, wherever truth is striving against lies, wherever man is sorrowful—there let your sympathy flow in help, there let your protest be heard, there sacrifice yourself. That will bless, dignify, profit, develop, exalt, and inspire the future. Whether your name live or not in England and the world, your influence will.

Nor will your inner life with God, the sacred silent religion of the soul, suffer by this ; it will gain in depth and power. For this life is the very life God has sent you into the world to live for Him. This is His work you do, the saving of mankind, and He will answer your doing of it with the gift of His dearest and clearest communion.

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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Nor will you be apart from, but always more near to, your Master Jesus. For this also was His life. Himself has said it, "For this end was I born ; for this cause I came into the world, to bear witness to the Truth."

**The Majesty  
of Fidelity**

There are a mass of observances and rites and commandments about spiritual matters which are often good in themselves, but which the moment they are imposed from without or connected with punishment, persecution, or spiritual threats, are turned into devilish instruments which Jesus would sweep away, as, in His wrath, He swept away the bitter observance of the Sabbath the moment it was used to injure the liberty or the good of man. What do you think He would say, to take an example in our day, of those who declare that unless a man is baptised he cannot be saved, or that if a man will not go to church he is going to hell, or that if he denies the Sacraments

**Rites and  
Ceremonies  
—Their Use  
and Abuse**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Rites and  
Ceremonies  
—Their Use  
and Abuse

he is divided from Christ ? He would say of such persons that they were a generation of vipers. Of all that cruelty which, by insisting on the necessity for salvation of ritual and ceremony, lays a burden on men which cannot be borne by freedom ; and which deepens the common suffering of the race by adding spiritual terror to natural pain—we are to clear Christianity, as Jesus would have cleared it. Nothing which enslaves the conscience, imprisons the reason, gives power to one class over the souls of another, makes the service of God a service of fear, binds the free movement of the soul in worship, condemns men to everlasting ruin as a part of religion, injures the sense of brotherhood, separates one man or one class or one sect from another, injures or divides the unity of humanity, sins by one grain of intolerance or exclusion against the love of man—has anything to do with Christianity or has any part in Jesus Christ. Keep ceremonies and doctrinal forms as much as you please, but let them be the

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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fresh outgrowth of your own inner life ; keep them, but in readiness to change them in accordance with the moral and spiritual progress of mankind and of your own soul ; keep them as useful for the outward shape of inward feeling ; but the moment they become tyrannical over yourself or over others, the moment they divide you from others, the moment you feel inclined to make them absolutely needful for yourself or to impose them as needful on others—let them perish ; destroy them, as Jesus destroyed those which existed in His time. Get back to the spiritual life, to love of God and of man, to union with a Father, to the upward welling of the whole soul to Him, to union with all mankind and love of all, no matter what faith, or no faith, they have. They are men, and God's children. That is all you need to know. They are destined, as you are, to immortal life with God. That is all you need for hope and joy. Let every form you use embody these universal truths. Then you may be sure that Jesus

Rites and  
Ceremonies  
—Their Use  
and Abuse

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Rites and  
Ceremonies  
—Their Use  
and Abuse

Christ is walking hand in hand with you ;  
then you may be certain that you are a  
Christian.

Apt to  
Teach

Of all the gifts God gives to man, there is none more useful than the gift of teaching. In comparison with the gift of genius or of prophecy, it is humble ; but the usefulness of a gift is often in proportion to its humility. It makes little noise in the world, but it is none the worse for its quiet. Like the work of Nature, it does not think how useful it is, nor how to have itself recognised, but simply how best to fulfil its end ; and being wholly at one with doing, it is impatient of mere talk, more impatient of that even than of wickedness. It loves good speech, but it knows, with Solomon, that the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury of life and penury of intellect. It knows the nobility of language—that language which speaks the depth of feeling in the soul, which throws



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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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into perfect form the careful thought of the intellect, which expresses in happy humour grace and sunniness of nature ; words which are as deep waters, words sweet as a honeycomb, words spoken in due season, words which stir like a trumpet or thrill like a violin. It knows that to use the gift of speech well and wisely is at once one of the noblest and hardest of victories, and it urges that work on all, and strives for it incessantly. Yes, a man ought to be able to put into a form his fellows can understand the idea that is in him, and he is not educated unless he can do so. Some may do it only in action, and that expression is worthy of high honour, but he who can do it in speech as well as in action is worthy of higher honour. Still, in almost every case, the expression in act should accompany the expression in speech, the lightning of deeds go with the thunder of words. For the pregnant silence of the one gives force to the noble utterance of the other.

Apt to  
Teach

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The  
Foundation  
of Teaching**

There is no need to enlarge on the truth that quietude is the element in which useful work is done. Every one has heard, almost to weariness, that though the power of bringing thought to bear on life is gained by collision with men, yet that the force which is then developed is generated best in silence. That is God's lesson to the teacher, to all of us, for all of us have to teach a little ; but chiefly to those who make teaching their work. Therefore I say, let your preparation for this work be thought and silence. In thought and in silent work knowledge is attained, and the work of the teacher is to administer knowledge. But the way of gaining it and the way of using it—that is the important question. Be master of your knowledge, not its slave. Win it for the sake of creating ideas, for the sake of producing work, not of displaying cleverness, audacity, or memory. Let your opinions grow out of a living root of thought, and not be a mere collection of other men's thoughts.

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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Let your facts become a living body, able to move and work, and not only a skeleton with a catalogue of the bones attached, and the bones themselves linked only by lifeless logic. By sincere toil in quiet and resolute hours turn your opinions and materials into thoughts and principles ; get them well in hand ; and then, and not till then, have you the knowledge which will profit mankind ; then, and not till then, can you teach with power. Till thought has secluded itself for the arrangement of knowledge, a man knows nothing, not even his own existence. The knowledge of one's own being comes only when one has conceived ideas under which the things we have received through the senses, and learnt from books and men, can be harmonised. It is only then we become persons who can rightly teach those for whom teaching is everything, only then that we realise that it is our paramount duty to do that work for our fellow-men.

The Founda-  
tion of  
Teaching

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Waiting  
with  
Kindled  
Lamps

Another year has begun, and as we look back on the many human questions which arose in the bygone year, and which, in other forms, will arise again and again till they are answered, we ask ourselves in what temper of soul we shall meet the years to come, and live for the good of mankind. Are we to stand with the wise or the foolish virgins? Do we mean to keep awake, or to drift into a slumber of the soul? Are our loins girded, and our lights burning, ready for the cry, believing in and eager for the Bridegroom? Have we faith in God, as the Father of the human race, faith in His direction of it to union with Himself? That is the main lamp to keep alight with the oil of love and hope and courage. Have we any faith at all in a Kingdom of God at hand, always coming in new thought on the world, whenever the world is exhausted? Or are things so bad with our soul that we have no belief in the renewal of the world's life,

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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no sense that God's eternal life is breathing in the human race, and that when one cycle of life is completed, another begins? Have we sunk into saying and feeling that society is altogether in decay, and the world bad in and out, and no resurrection of it possible? That means, of course, that we are without God, and apart from man; that we have no faith in Him, and no faith in humanity; that there is nothing before us but corruption, and nothing with us but decay; that, in the race of life, we are beaten victims or careless cynics. It is not a pleasant position, nor a brave one. Its courage, when it has courage, is the courage of the wild animal who dies alone, a courage which has no life in it to send on to others. Its only care for humanity is in the hope that mankind will utterly perish soon, and so be free from cureless pain; and humanity despises that care for it, and justly, for it brings no strength, no comfort, and no hope. Faith in the resurrection of man, in the redemption of society, however low it fall, in a day of

Waiting  
with  
Kindled  
Lamps

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Waiting  
with  
Kindled  
Lamps

the Lord, in a Kingdom of God coming again and again, from century to century, on humanity—that is the inspiring, strengthening, comforting, exalting power which pours new life into our own personal life, and into the arteries of society.

Let that lamp burn clearly in our hearts this year ; let us pray for the coming of the Bridegroom, bringing with Him a religion less exclusive, more loving ; a universal church which by getting rid of negations, and determining those doctrines which belong only to Christ and not to His commentators, will include all who love the Father and Jesus our Master with sincerity ; a social state in which one shall be for all and all for one, the basis of which shall be self-giving, not self-interest ; a government which shall place all its measures, domestic and foreign, not on the foundation of expediency but of justice and truth and pity and love, that is, on the character of God.

To look for this is to love the very thought of it, and loving it to labour for

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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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it above all things, to make incessant provision for it, filling and re-filling your lamp with oil ; to take thought day by day for that divine and eager morrow. That is your Christian Prudence. When you have it, you will understand what Jesus meant when He told us not to be so anxious about the outward things of life.

Waiting  
with  
Kindled  
Lamps

There is a book of which the young minister in Church or Sect knows as yet but little, which he ought to study daily, the study of which alone fits him fully for his ministry ; and all the learning he has reached in college or university gives him small help in that study. It is the book of Human Nature. It needs close and ardent study ; it takes a long time to learn how to read it, and longer still to be able to make a wise and noble use of what has been read. It is so vast and varied a volume that a lifetime may only enable us to read a little of it. For every page is the

The Book of  
Human  
Nature

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Book of  
Human  
Nature** history of a soul and none of the pages  
are the same.

Yet at the root of Human Nature there are a few universal elements which are common to all men and women, and these simple properties, seized and mastered, give us the clue to their varieties. It is these the Christian minister should search and discover, and, when discovered, preach about. With these keys in his hands, he can unlock nearly all the mysteries of the human heart, and bring comfort, help, teaching, peace and finally joy and inspiration to men and women in the trials, temptations, doubts and despairs of life.

There is only one way to get down to these roots, to learn how to trace their fibres, and to be able to teach from what we have learnt. It is to love men as Christ loved them, to believe in the good in them however evil they may be, to penetrate into their hearts by sympathy and pity. And when you have learned and loved, then preach your experience



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## LESSONS BY THE WAY

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and your love. Speak, not of criticism and philosophy, of theology and doctrinal differences, but of the sorrows and joys, the temptations and battle and victory of men and women, of all you have seen and felt in the week as you have gone in and out among men. Speak of what you have felt in your own soul, what you have suffered and how you have fought, what supported you in the battle, and how you won your victory. Tell the tales of human nature in the pulpit, the strange and obscure as well as the common and the simple. And make this the daily burden and subject of your teaching. Show how Christ did that very thing in His life, and how we should follow Him in that loving and saving work. And, with Him, bring all you know and teach of human nature into union with the Father who made our nature, who loves it as His child, and who is leading it into everlasting union with Himself. To do this is to be a true minister, the servant of men, the revealer of God

**The Book of  
Human  
Nature**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Book of  
Human  
Nature**

to man, the beloved teacher. All you say will then touch home to the hearts of men. You will bless and be blessed in your work. And every year you will know more of the infinite book of human nature, and find in it endless subjects for discourse; and, the more you find, the deeper will become your love of man. And then, deep within, in the secret of the soul, you will grow, as Jesus grew, through love of man, nearer and dearer to the Father of mankind.

### III

#### *SOCIAL PROBLEMS*

THE spirit of Pharisaism is one of the greatest perils which beset our country. England can only be sure of enduring greatness when she has learnt something of international self-sacrifice ; when, as part of her national work, she recognises herself, not as separate from, but as one of the brotherhood of the Peoples ; when her interests are not those only of her own progress and her own liberty, but those of the progress and liberty of Mankind ; when, instead of finding out the evils and wrongdoing of other nations, she stands in the temple of the world, and smites upon her breast and prays—" God be merciful to me a sinner." She has ills enough of her own

England's  
Great Peril  
—The Spirit  
of the  
Pharisee

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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England's  
Great Peril  
—The Spirit  
of the  
Pharisee

to look to without the necessity of expending Pharisaic pity upon other nations. Pauperism, the accumulation of land in a few hands, the sanitary state of her towns, the incompetence, through red-tapism, of her officials, the state of the agricultural labourer, the need of state-measures to meet disease and drunkenness, the need of some redemptive prison-life for criminals, and, until quite lately, the education of the people—these are a few of the things which national Pharisaism ought to repent of. It is the most fatal Pharisaism when a nation, believing that its own will *must* be right, puts aside as inexpedient, and as impolitic, those eternal laws of right and truth which are the very Being of God, those eternal ideas of duty to man, which are the very Being of humanity—and, standing apart in the temple of the world, throws its hands towards heaven on the one side, and towards earth on the other, in equal indifference to God and Man provided its own interests are

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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secured, crying—"God, we thank Thee we are not as other nations are."

England's  
Great Peril  
—The Spirit  
of the  
Pharisee

But men will say—If England is to take interest in other nations, how is she to do her own work? Ought she not to isolate herself on that?

No! I never yet found in private life that isolation round family interests and neglect of all public interests produced a well-educated or noble-minded set of sons and daughters, or that the household was better managed by persons of limited range of thought and feeling; nor do I believe that it is a system which works well in the training of a people, or the management of a country. Selfishness produces selfishness, pride, pride, just as surely as acorns produce oaks and grains of wheat, wheat—and that, too, with accumulating productiveness—and the whole catalogue of all national wrong-doing is produced by men of all classes, offices, clubs and unions believing only in themselves, and not in God and their duties to their fellow-men; using God, when they think

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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England's  
Great Peril  
—The Spirit  
of the  
Pharisee

of Him at all, as a means of deepening their pride and isolation ; using Him only as a witness to their want of nothing, to their perfection—" God, I thank Thee I am not as other nations are, as other men." 'Tis a fatal situation, and till they change their temper into the humility which naturally conducts them into thinking of others more than for themselves, and living for others as well as for themselves, they will never be justified in the eyes of mankind.

Dry Bones  
and the  
Spirit of  
Life

Two of the stages through which many of us go are—the stage of dry criticism, the stage of worldliness ; and, at the end, Nature is a dance of atoms, Man is dying and God is nowhere.

Wonderful to relate, we are not satisfied ! Listen to that wail which in a society, over-ridden with these tyrants, comes to your ears from everything around you, from poems, from novels, from the magazines,

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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from pictures and music, from biographies, from social, political, and religious movements, from the whole heart of a society sick of a dead Nature, a dying Humanity, a degraded Human Nature, and a forgotten God! There is nobody satisfied but the worldly folk and the philosophers who have done the work. We are not satisfied, as we stand in this valley of dry bones. And at last, shaking off the tyranny of the understanding and of the world, the soul awakening out of its sleep asserts itself, knows its immortal powers, believes in its personal origin, support and end, and calls aloud—“Wind of God, Spirit of life, come, breathe on these dead bones and they shall live!” And God comes streaming in on our inward world, like spring on the wintry woods, and Nature lives again for us, and we hear Him thinking in her movement, loving in her life. All her being, which is His, speaks once more to us. And Humanity breathes again. It is alive again for us, that mighty creature, all its past, its present, its future,

**Dry Bones  
and the  
Spirit of Life**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Dry Bones  
and the  
Spirit of Life

and we are alive within it. Youth returns to us, life and imagination, and ardour to all our work. Art is born again. History clothes itself with a living body. Work becomes worth doing. We know that inexhaustible life of God is in the human race, and will never leave it; and in our souls a victorious cry arises, and bids us come out of slavery and see our deliverance; "These are they, these hopes and faiths, who once were dead and are alive again, and behold, they are alive for evermore." It is our personal salvation.

"I have seen  
an End  
of all Per-  
fection,  
But——"

We have not the same complaint to make as the Psalmist made in his day. We do not look back from an irreligious kingdom on a time shortly past when the kingdom was religious. We call ourselves a Christian country. But there is a movement among us against popular Christianity, and many religious men looking at it would join in the



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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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Psalmist's cry : " I have seen an end of all perfection."

"I have seen  
an End  
of all Per-  
fection,  
But——"

But without being an optimist—for, indeed, I have never shared in that optimism which is blind to facts, and, therefore, unable to act fittingly among them—I cannot join in this despairing cry. I do not underrate either the prevalence of scepticism or its power, but it would be entirely false to fact to look upon it as wholly evil, or essentially irreligious. I have not seen in it an end of all perfection. It has its morality, and it has its religion. I do not believe in the basis on which its morality rests as one which will satisfy the problem of a morality for mankind, but I do believe in the high morality of its followers. We see in it the beginning and not the end of a path towards a perfection. And as to its religion, there lies, deep beneath all the scepticism of the day, wherever it is honest, wherever it is not spoiled by bigotry, the most religious desire in the world ; a desire which is almost passionate now among men—even among

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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"I have seen  
an End  
of all Per-  
fection,  
But——"

those who cry that there is nothing to be found in answer to it—the desire to find truth, the belief in truth as the most precious possession in the world. Where that is, scepticism is not an evil, though it is a distress. Where that is, scepticism is, in truth, unbelief which is in readiness to believe the moment it sees its way to do so without being false to conscience or reason. And God is not far from these men, nor are they far from God. Could they at this instant express themselves in terms of religion, they would say : " Sick of words that stand for thoughts, of doctrines that stand for action, of superstitions that stand for truths, of formulas that stand for ideas, we turn to Thee, Eternal Truth. Thou who art called God, whom we would fain claim, if we could, as Father, make Thyself known to us. We have seen an end of all things that once we thought perfect—but Thy commandment ought to be exceeding broad." This is the meaning of that cry about going back to the primal truths of morality, about doing in

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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love what we can for men even without hope of immortality, about excluding dogmas, about believing in nothing which cannot be demonstrated. It is a cry for absolute truth ; and, let God be confessed or not by those who cry, it is a cry for God. It is a cry for unselfish goodness and downright doing of it for the sake of man ; and, let Christ be confessed or not, that is following in His steps.

"I have seen  
an End of  
all Per-  
fection,  
But——"

In books, in society, we meet continually the view of the slave owner, that all native races are naturally inferior to the white ; that they are of a different blood, and incapable of the same civilisation, that they are born to be slaves and servants, as if we ourselves were not just as savage in the old times as the worst savages in Africa or Australia. And that view practically ends (though men are ashamed to confess it) in believing that these races are not destined to the same immortality as

Equality

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Equality**      we, are not children of God in the sense that we are. It is a view which the history of these nations in contact with the white seems to confirm ; but only seems, for if they are degraded, it is we who have accomplished their degradation. We give them no chance. We bring our diseases and vices amongst them ; we do not bring them the conscience against these things which civilisation has developed in us ; we assume that they cannot be civilised, and therefore they cannot be. We make and keep them that which we believe them to be ; and even the Christian Missionary brings with him to these races his prejudices, his faith in a natural inequality, his profound disbelief in any race but his own. That is a lie in the sight of God, and Christianity will not succeed against opponent religions until we grasp, and act faithfully on, the Christian declaration, " God hath made of one blood all nations upon the face of the whole earth." Possess that truth, and no brutal instincts, no cruelty, no ignorance, can destroy your

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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belief in the immortal dignity of all men, **Equality** whatever be their colour or their savagery, their lying, murder, theft, or treachery. Possess that belief, and you will lose that natural shrinking from another type than your own, which the negro has as strongly as the white, and for the same unintelligent and uncivilised reason. Black or white, they are of the same race—the race of God ; of the same nature, the nature of man ; of the same heritage, the heritage of immortality. Is not that equality ?

Again, owing to this equal lineage from God, there are also two other true grounds of equality ; one in man's common possession of the affections, the other in man's common sense of right, the common possession of the idea of duty. Putting certain strange exceptions aside, which we can generally trace to religious fear and ignorance, that is, to superstition, these two things are practically universal. They belong to human nature in all lands, and they unite us in a true bond of equality. Parental love, filial

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Equality**      love, family love, tribal love, the love of country—a myriad, myriad hearts beat with these and beat in tune, and in the centre beats the heart of God Himself. The Indian mother who dies to save her child, the savage lover who defends his mistress, the warrior who meets death for his native village in the wilds of Africa, are equal, through their equal passion, with those who do the same deeds on the plains of Europe, though between them there is the difference of centuries of civilisation. The same light is in the eyes of both, the same divine thrill runs through their dying heart; in both lives and moves as they lift their eyes to heaven, their equal kindred, through affection, with Eternal Love.

Just as strong is the equalising bond of the sense of an external Imperative, the conviction that what is right ought to be done. Savage and civilised, poor and rich, ignorant and learned, thief, murderer, apostle, and martyr, in them all dwells duty, the voice of the will of God. By the in-

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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dwelling of that, all past, present, and future generations of men are knit together into one equal union. On this foundation of equality stands the vilest of men or the highest of the archangels. It is the link which binds us to heaven and separates us from hell.

Equality

It is a great mistake to think that young people do not suffer, and have no trouble to endure, because they are as yet sheltered from those ills of life which fall upon us from without. Their troubles, their trials arise mainly—for I speak of those who have happy homes and health—from within, from their own character ; from the difficulty they have in fitting themselves to the world in which they live ; from the greater difficulties of shaping their own inner life into order, of getting its capacities into hand so as to be able to use them, of choosing out of the multitude of ideas for life which incessantly fly in and out of the soul those which are

The Shadow  
over Young  
Lives

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Shadow  
over Young  
Lives**

most capable of being developed into use and power—of finding out, in fact, what they can best do in this life, and clinging to it with all their might.

It is true that there is much pleasure in this, for one feels the sense and the keenness of life in it. It is the rushing of the stream. But, for all that, there is often severe trouble in it—the stream gets into foam and whirlpools among rocks—and we do ill, when we who are older, do not consider that trouble, and give it no sympathy. For the young have no experience to help them, and every one must make their own experience. They must fight out their trials alone, and they are more alone than we are. Our very experience is company to us, and past troubles sympathise with new troubles; but all is new and strange to the young. And we often have some one very close to us with whom we can share the daily strife within; but the young are difficult and reserved, and have to find their own way out the labyrinth with no Ariadne to give them a clue. What



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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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is rough they must make smooth alone, and what is crooked straight in silence ; enduring to the end, contending inwardly—if they endure and contend at all—in a secret battle. If they are true, if they are worth their salt, they are generally saved, for they have, what their elders have not, a reserve of life. But they are not conscious of that reserve, they do not know they have so much capital ; and great often is their trouble and their pain. But the greater it is, the more should be our sympathy with them ; and the higher also—since they have all the world before them, and God with them—their own set resolve, their eager passion to win the victory.

**The Shadow  
over Young  
Lives**

“ It cannot be helped,” says the tradesman, “ I must compete with my neighbour and under-sell him. If I can buy labour cheap, why should I not ? ” Yes, very true if all he wants be money, if greed be first, and loving-kindness nowhere in his life ;

**The Cheap-  
ness of  
Flesh and  
Blood**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Cheap-  
ness of  
Flesh and  
Blood**

very true if it does not matter at all how the house of his property is upbuilt, how much misery lies crying at its foundation, how much blood and ruin of souls are mixed with the mortar that holds its stones together. But if the tradesman were to say to himself—"I am a Christian and a man; and I think my religion and my brotherhood should enter into my business"—would he not find a way to make less money perhaps, but to gain more of the gold of heart which alone passes current in the world where God the Father rules, or where even there is a belief in humanity being one? Were he to ask himself—"What did Jesus say to men? Was it to ruin or to save the lost? was it to oppress or to help the broken-hearted? was it to imprison or to deliver the captive?"—why then, he might find it difficult to do what he is doing. Could he but speak to his own soul, and say—"Can I not live on less, and not drive the poor to despair? Why should I make so much money, what is the real use it of to

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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me, along with all this wretchedness which stains it? Is it not crushing my very soul out of existence? Why do I want money, what are the purposes to which I apply it? Are they worth the wrong I do, are they worth the loss of the ideal life, the loss of love, and truth, and honesty, and justice? Is any wealth in all the world worth the loss of my heart? Why do I not deal face to face with my workers, learn to know them, lift them out of their loneliness by sympathy, pay them directly such a wage as will leave me just profit, be their friend, and gain all I need to live an honest life? Should I not be happier in making happiness?"—questions which a tradesman nowadays might well ask himself; and, I think, if he answered them, with a heart free from covetousness and aspiring to be like the Son of Man, he would find that there is a reply to the bloodless statement he so often makes—"It cannot be helped." At least, he would live the true life, and his soul would be clear of the blood of men.

**The Cheap-  
ness of  
Flesh and  
Blood**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Cheap-  
ness of  
Flesh and  
Blood

And as to the buyer : if—instead of searching the town over until he find goods selling at prices which, if he think at all, he knows cannot be produced at that figure without women being driven along the edge of fate and death—he were to make enquiries after places where he could know that fair wages are given, and deal there—a matter easy enough to a little trouble—he would cease to be an accomplice in a series of wrong doings, and do more to lift women out of this pit of misfortune than if he gave them large sums out of his purse. Those who buy the cheapest goods at shops known for reckless competition, are buying the life-blood of women ; and if the clothes they wear could speak, they would cry out of unspeakable sorrow, of work continued from hour to hour and day to day, of sickening weariness and pain. It is no excuse to say —“ I did not know.” There are plenty of means of knowing ; plenty of light is thrown upon these matters for those who wish to see them. But the most part do not

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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wish to see. "If the things are cheap, they say, I will have them. It does not do to enquire nicely into these affairs." Yes, this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.

The Cheap-  
ness of  
Flesh and  
Blood

In our objection to equality, we need not enthrone and worship inequality as a god. Men will always differ by natural genius, industry, and temperament. There is no fear of the dulness of uniformity ever prevailing, nor of Communism ever being set up. These are explanations of equality put forward by the enemies of any social change in order to give it a bad name, as the Quaker did to the dog who bit him. The equality we wish for now, and the only one we care to reach at present, and to reach not by any outward force, but by the steady conviction of its rightness by the great majority of the people, and by the embodiment of it in laws

The True  
Citizen

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The True  
Citizen**

passed by the people in Parliament, is the equality for all men and women of the ordinary and necessary means of Life—of light, and air, and water, and a decent roof-tree, of education, of labour, of moderate leisure, of opportunity to train the imagination and the reason, the conscience, and the spirit—that is, equality of those means whereby the whole man may be freely developed into a healthy citizen, whose first duty and pride should be to sacrifice himself for the good of the whole state. This is the equality we want, and it is a wise and just demand. This is what we mean to have for all men and women in this country, and it is to be attained not by violent revolution, but by the voice of the people represented in Parliament.

In that great struggle between the unselfish and the selfish idea of a state, in which the very life of Christianity is far more involved than in any theological presentation of it, it is high time that we should know our place and do our duty. We cannot

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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expect the old, who have grown up in the old conditions, to take their part in this battle. But the young in whose ears its trumpets are ringing—they ought to realise it, and live for it. Many of them are working, each in their own place, for the cure of individual wrong and ills. It is right to do this, else they would slip into a mere life of theory ; but they should also do their individual work of charity with a direction towards the larger aim, and with a clear conception of that aim. It is their duty to realise what the coming society ought to be, and the right methods to produce it ; and while they labour in behalf of individual cases, to labour also for the just social condition of the whole of mankind over all the world. A noble, universal idea, having its roots in justice and love, and permitting no methods of attaining it which violate either of these roots of law, will not make their individual work less active, but more active ; not less loving, but more loving ; not less full of the common sense

**The True  
Citizen**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The True  
Citizen**

which handles daily life aright, but more full of it.

And it will expand their thought, develop their imagination, and ennoble their soul.

Slow is all progress wrought in this fashion, but we must not let that dismay us. In slowness which has a clear aim and just methods, there is certainty, and few mistakes. We may not reap the harvest we have sown. Life is too short for that. But we have sown it, and others will enter into our labours, and eat of the corn, and bless the sowers. And half the blessedness of Heaven will be our joy in this harvest of our work. It will make the happiness of men as yet unborn. This is the true reward, and if it does not seem enough, why then, our whole temper of life, the very basis of our soul, needs changing.

**Emancipa-  
tion of  
Women**

The first real step in their emancipation was made by Christianity, and its bitterest



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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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opponents cannot deny that fact. When it declared the doctrine of universal love ; of the individual value and work of every soul of man and woman ; of God's Fatherhood of His daughters as well as of His sons ; of the duty laid on women as well as on men of doing the work of love to all who were in trouble of mind or body, it lifted, at one bound, the whole of womanhood, under Christianity, to a higher level than heathenism or Judaism had ever conceived. We dimly see through the stories in the Gospel the relation of Christ to women. He gave them work to do for His cause ; they ministered to Him ; He took a personal interest in their individual lives ; they wandered about with Him. Whatever be the truth concerning the stories of His mother and Himself, He left behind Him such a feeling concerning her that she soon became an ideal personage in the Christian Church ; and as Christianity went on, the worship of the woman developed, not for wisdom as Athena, nor for impersonated qualities of

Emancipa-  
tion of  
Women

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Emancipation of Women

nature and humanity as with other of the Greek goddesses, but for herself as the image and representation of the delicate, tender, and pitiful qualities of womanhood, of the special duties of womanhood, of motherhood, of purity, charity, sympathy with suffering gained through suffering. Nor was it only good women whom Jesus lifted into work and use, and in whom He saw the Divine. What means the figure of the Magdalen? Where in all the rest of history will you find anything like that? Where else will you find all that it contains for the bettering of the heart of humanity, for the evolution into usefulness and power of the lost?

The apostles were not behindhand. Because Paul stopped things which were tending to abuses, he has been accused of being hard on women. On the contrary, there was no man who did so great a work for womanhood. He set free, and sent into active life, to social and religious life in the world beyond their home, hundreds of women pining for self-development, for sacred and loving

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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work. Women were called sisters by the apostles, and given their equal place in the work of Christ and in the world. The widows and the unmarried—the very classes neglected by the Jews—were consecrated especially and set apart in an honourable position, their place and work secured, their isolated condition changed into a condition of repute and social usefulness. They found themselves a living part of the movement of the Church and world. The tendency to immorality from having nothing to do ceased. The evils of their state of hopeless boredom passed away. We hear no more of woman being the scourge, the disgrace, the evil genius of man. We hear, all through the Epistles, of her being the very opposite. Christianity created a new life for half of the human race, and that half the one most capable of daily devotion and self-sacrifice for the sake of love. The womanly virtues, neglected before, except in the circle of home, were developed now by work and brought to bear on the great work of healing

Emancipation of Women

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Emancipation of Women

by love and pity, by consolation and enkindling the sorrows of mankind. That was the creation of Christianity, and it was one of the most perfect expressions of the spirit with which Jesus set the world on fire.

Of course, and especially among the Romans and the Teutonic tribes, women of intelligence and power were valued, and took a high place even in public affairs ; but what had now changed was the condition of the ordinary woman, especially in the East. She had now her own work, independent of married life. She was now bound up with the working of a great public society, with the improvement of society as its aim. And this society expanded her womanly powers, gave them their special work. The founder had declared these powers to be as useful and as powerful as those of men.

Again, women were lifted out of the circle of the family in which they had been strictly closed. Christ made something

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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Emancipa-  
tion of  
Women

higher than the family—the brotherhood of all, the universal home in which there was one Father and Mother, one home relationship, in which every woman was mother and sister to all who needed the special kindness of these relationships. Everything which made home dear was extended to all the world. All home duties and rights were due from all, and might be claimed by all. Who is my mother and sister and brother? said Jesus. Here they are; and He pointed to the multitude who listened to His good news, and claimed His love. In that, and in all it meant, and in the apostolic action which followed it, woman was no longer imprisoned within the limits of the family, no longer left stranded like a wreck on the shores of the world if she had no family, no longer forced to bow to the opinions of men concerning her place. She was made an individual, had her own soul in her own charge, bound to form her own life under the law of love, set free to do her own work under that law. Her special

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Emancipation of Women

qualities, her special nationality, her several types, were utilised. Moral liberty, moral individuality, spiritual individuality, spiritual liberty were given to her. It was a vast step for womanhood ; it was a vaster step still in the progress of the world.

### Equality of Welfare

The equal welfare of all—that is the aim for which we ought to live ! By the hopes of this we should direct our life. This should be at the root of our public morality, and at the root of our human enthusiasms. In business, in professional life, in government, at home, in Parliament, in society, in our leisure, culture, and our play, this thought should never leave us, but command our whole action like a king. If it did, how it would upturn and dissolve all that part of our daily life which is pursued for our pleasure alone, or our advantage alone ! In what way, in its mirror, would appear the lives of those who have steadily lived for nothing else than the accumulation

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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of wealth or for nothing else but their own amusement, their own knowledge, or their own love of beauty? In that mirror their lives would appear unnatural deformities.

Equality of  
Welfare

Then, again, there are those who think to themselves, "Welfare of all, indeed! No, no, my own welfare first and the welfare of my children, that I and they may have more than other folk; so shall we be honoured and obeyed. Welfare of all! where, then, is *my* welfare?" I answer: "It is in the welfare of all." "Oh, that is incredible, one of the sentimental dreams; I am sick of the folly of it." "Yes, indeed, you are sick, and the worst of the sickness is that you are persuaded it is health."

I do not advocate equality of wealth or of capital in any shape, or even equality of worldly advantage. Those are matters for public discussion, or for public law—that is, for the assent and conviction of the whole body politic. What I do advocate,

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Equality of  
Welfare**

and what I say we may hope for in the future, and must have in the future, is an equality of welfare, which by no means is equivalent to an equality of riches. I mean that the diseased parts of the state should be made whole ; that the main sources of a wise, educated, happy, well-ordered, simple, and healthy life should be equally in the power of all men and women, from youth to age, from birth to death ; that the absolute necessities of a decent life, of knowledge, of a love of beauty, should be in the power of all men to attain equally ; that a just amount of leisure should be in the capacity of all ; that equal means of just and simple pleasure should be possible to all ; and, naturally, that terror and misery and starvation and the present bitterness of the struggle for very life, and the slavery of millions of men and women and all the wrath and wrong, hatred and vengeance, which these evils store up in the hearts of men and women, and which make crime and disease, and drunkenness, and madness, and private bloodshed, and public



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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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war—should be, as they ought to be in any society which pretends to be civilised, lessened year by year, and finally annihilated. That these things should be accomplished is the aim for which we ought to live. That they should be accomplished—not by violent revolution, but by the people of England, in all but universal agreement, shaping them into permanent forms in the laws of the state—ought to be our method of bringing them to pass. It is the right thing to do ; it is the loving thing to do ; it is the wise thing to do ; it is the first duty of a state to accomplish it. It can be done, and it will be done.

**Equality of  
Welfare**

If the future society lives alone for outward welfare, if it allow its enemies to betray it into that alone, its hope is deceived and its happiness doomed. If it renew, for its direction of life, the theory of human nature on which the old political economy was based, and on which the armies of com-

**Equality of  
Love**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Equality of  
Love

petition set up their tents—that the self-interest of man was the only, or the main, motive of all his acts—why, then, any future where welfare should be equal is the thinnest of dreams. If self-interest be truly man's master, the welfare of the whole is certainly impossible. We shall then always keep our diseases, our poor, our crimes, our unjust privileges of overwork and over-sorrow—all the miseries which make our cities flame like hell.

Even if we should attain equality of welfare, it is not enough, and it will pass away, unless there is also an equality of love in the hearts of all. Unless the soul have its proper welfare as well as the body, the welfare of the body or of the state, if it were attained, would be endangered. The proper welfare of the soul of humanity is to live in love. Equality in knowledge, in intelligence, in the creation of beauty, cannot, at least in the present, be attained by all, but an equality of love is in the power of all; and I mean by love not only the

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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temper of soul such as Paul lays down in the Epistle to the Corinthians—a temper which makes all who have it true gentlemen—but the temper which loses all thought of self in enjoyment, reverence, and honour of things and persons and ideas beyond ourselves ; and, if need be, is ready to gladly give up all worldly possessions for their sake, and willingly at last to die for their cause.

**Equality of  
Love**

This is the other thing needful for the progress of society into nobler manners, purer laws. If we can get it, we can get all the rest ; and without it we shall keep none of the good things we hope to gain. To think of this as the first thing to be gained, to speak of its absolute necessity, to place it as an ideal before the race, is not in favour. What are called practical men, hard-headed fellows, mock at it ; all the commercial spirit cries, “ Crucify it, crucify it ! we have no king but self-interest.” Even those who have a tendency towards it, say that it is too difficult for them to

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Equality of Love**     attain, that it is hopeless to hope it for the world.

Well, I do not expect that it will be won quickly. The whole of our present society is built on the opposite view. We have been saturated with that view from our birth. The only opponent of it is the Spirit of Christianity, and we have turned Christianity into its supporter. It will indeed be difficult to change the social heart, but it is not impossible. Already much has been done. There is more pity in the world than there was ; there is more sacrifice for causes. Look at the vast systematic sacrifice made by the whole of the more intelligent and industrious working-men in their trades-unions for the less intelligent and the less active workmen. That is the great example for the wealthier and more educated classes, who as yet have no idea of such social sacrifice. Look, too, at the new sense of justice to the criminal, the unfortunate, the lazy, the aged poor, the cruelly abused, which is slowly growing up

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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among us ; consider the increasing demand that all citizens should make the welfare of the whole state their first duty, and the first charge on their property ; consider the new responsibility for the welfare, peace, and progress of all mankind which even opponent nations are beginning to conceive and feel. These things are new—at least in this extended form. What I ask for is not impossible.

Equality of  
Love

At any rate, let us as persons strive for this inward temper ; this capacity to live for what is beyond one's own interest ; this eagerness for ideas, and the power of dying for them ; this devotion to causes which bring in no cash ; this love of the beautiful more than the comfortable ; this love of others more than of oneself ; this power of forgetting one's own thoughts and feelings in love of nature and man, of the Father and source of love ; and then we shall hand on to a world where an equality of welfare has been established by law the tradition of that self-forgetting love which

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Equality of Love** alone will establish securely the continuance of an outward welfare. First in time is the equality of welfare ; first in importance is the equality of love.

**Our Eden** If our crowded life, if our wide-branching civilisation have their sins, the best way to meet them is in the midst of them, not at a distance from them ; if this life has its temptations into which we are only too ready to fall, we must fight for the good at the centre of their attack, and there overcome them. To get out of their reach is to desert the army of good, and to betray our fellow-soldiers. It is more ; it is to lose the power of showing that which is good in our crowded civilisation, the good of which its evils are the shadow. The end of such a desertion is pessimism. We will never make the good in modern life clear by running away from the troubles of our time and our surroundings into a garden where there is no difficulty, where

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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we only hear, beyond the wall, a faint **Our Eden** murmur of the desperate battle waged by our brothers whom we have deserted.

If we seek this ignoble refuge, other temptations, other evils await us there, worse than those we have escaped. Sloth, the crawling worm, the sins which beset the lonely, the vain and selfish heart, final despair and horror of a solitude in which love of man cannot breathe, dreadful weariness of ourselves, a far worse foe than the weariness of knowledge or of the vanities of life from which we fled. That, at least, was weariness of things outside ourselves ; but in the solitude of flight from the world in which our task is set, we bear within us our own self-weariness, an unremitting guest ; an old man of the sea who knits his strangling legs round the throat of the soul.

Do I say in all this that we are not to live the simpler life, nor ever to lie on the breast of vital nature, never to avoid the storm of politics, never to draw aside from the battles the intellect sets in array, never to

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Our Eden

divide ourselves from the ardours of the crowd? No, indeed! but I say that we win these reposes of the soul in the midst of the world of men. "I pray not," says the prayer of Jesus in the Gospel of John—"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." That is it: that should be our prayer and our life. It is possible, and it should be our endeavour to live in the midst of the movement of the world, as if we were in a noble garden; to live a simple life in the midst of luxury; to live careless of fame in the midst of ambitions; to live content in the midst of unbridled desires; to live not apart from the crowd, but apart from its overwhelming hurry and fury; to live without the mad anxieties to be rich among those who heap up riches; to love nature, man, and God, from whom both man and nature come, amidst a world that loves itself alone.

This is our Eden, and we may have it outside the walls of any ideal Paradise;



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among the thorns and thistles, while the sweat pours from our brow, and the reluctant earth bids us ply the spade unceasingly. For it is not where we are that matters, whether in city or country, but what we are. It is not the conditions of our outward life that matter ; it is the condition of the soul. The return to nature is not in the change of place or of customs ; it is in the change of the inward life. It is there that Jesus placed the very ground of human life. Establish your life upon it, and not all the storms of civilisation will shake the sweet serenity and natural joy of the immortal home which you will build for men. “ How shall I get back to nature ; how enjoy the sweet simplicity of ancient days ; how, in the centre of the town, live close to the garden, and be at one with the beauty of the earth ? ” And Jesus replies : “ Blessed are the meek ; they shall inherit the earth.”

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Unproductive Wealth

Wealth is made by the labour of men, and it may be said with justice that those who make it should have their full share of what they make. With still greater justice it may be said that those who possess it, without making it, should feel the duty, and answer the demand, that it should be reproductively employed. What labour has made should beget welfare for the labourers of the world, or secure for the world objects which will feed its intellect, its imagination, and develop for it the powers of the soul. It is an absolute robbery of the world to fling it away in vile misuse. To spend it on a mere show, on great dinners, on extravagant dress, on outshining our neighbours; to gamble it away in the hundred wicked ways which men in the city and in society have invented to excite themselves, is a shameless destruction of it, a deep guilt against God, and a crime against the human race. It is said that expenditure of this kind, since it gives em-

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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ployment, adds to the wealth of the whole, distributes capital ! One would think that fallacy had been answered often enough. All true distribution of wealth must be reproductive. It is one thing to buy seeds, plant them, and reap a harvest thirty-fold. It is another to buy seeds and to throw them into the fire. All expenditure on things which do not last, which are not necessary, useful, or inspiring—I do not say only for life, but for the real beauty and worth of life—which do not reproduce themselves, which give only a base pleasure, which add nothing to the wealth of the heart, the intellect, or the imagination of the world, is flinging seeds into the fire. It is burning that of which you are the trustee ; it is a fraud on the human race.

**Unproduc-  
tive Wealth**

I do not discuss here the way in which a colossal fortune has been won, or indeed a second-rate fortune, nor whether it is equitable that any one should possess enormous

**The Rich  
Man's Ideal  
Life**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Rich  
Man's Ideal  
Life

wealth. These are questions too large at present, though I have a clear opinion as to the answers which should be given to such questions. I do not think these vast fortunes should, in a proper state of society, exist at all.

But the day when labour shall receive its rightful due, when men shall not possess that which they do not earn, is yet very far away. We have to deal with the present, and in order to reduce the evils which come upon the community from the accumulation of vast wealth in the hands of a few, and from the existence of wealth in the hands of those who do no work for it, it is well to ask, "What are the ideas that should rule the lives of those who have it? What are their duties, what their sins?"

The first of their duties is, that no use whatever should be made of wealth, and no means used to increase it, which violate any part of the character of God—that is, which cannot be squared with justice

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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and purity and love and truth and honesty and pity and long-suffering and righteousness. The rich man should feel that he is, like others, the instrument of God ; and that he is using a power of God's in using his wealth. He ought to be able every night to spread his plans and his actions before the eyes of God, and to call on Him to approve them by His presence. He ought to feel that everything he does has been divinely done—done not only with the approval of his own conscience appealing to God, but done in accordance with a seeking after a nearer union to the perfection of His Father ; done, that is, not only morally, but spiritually, not only up to the level of the good, but also of the ideal life.

**The Rich  
Man's Ideal  
Life**

It would be a long struggle to attain to this, but even if there were in every rich man's soul the continued effort to attain it—imagine what a change would pass over this world ! What infinite sin, misery, evil, and misfortune would be avoided, what ruined

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Rich  
Man's Ideal  
Life**

lives redeemed, what villainy undone, what men saved from despair, what women saved from ruin ! The immoral increase, the immoral use of wealth—wealth apart from the thought and faith that it is a trust from God to whom men are responsible for the trust—is at the root of a third part of the evil of the world.

**The Right  
Application  
of Wealth**

In truth, there is at present no cultivated or Christian notion of the vast and noble human duties which the possession of ordinary still more of extraordinary wealth lays upon the men who have it. It has duties to the whole nation, and the nation calls on it to fulfil them. Wealth which has come, flood after flood, into the hands of men, either by the mere chance of having land which has become populous, or by their own inventive powers, or by clever manipulation of labour (to speak in a soft term of what I hold to be a wickedness), is a tremendous trust, as long as it is allowed

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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to exist at all, which the possessors of it should feel they hold for the people. The least which can be done with it, is that a great part of it should, year by year, be used for great public works and interests; and this should be done, not as a matter of charity, but as a matter of proud and lofty duty.

**The Right  
Application  
of Wealth**

Imagine only what they might do, and be happier than they are! They might make all their wealth romantic, the fountain of rivers of pleasure and utility. It should be their business to found colleges, to establish great libraries, to buy great tracts of land for the pleasure and health of the people, to organise great middle-class schools, to search out with diligence those who showed genius and to help them wisely to develop their usefulness, to buy great pictures and give them to the nation, to make great collections of art for the large provincial towns and to endow them, to build national buildings, to set up great baths for the people, to secure a great park,

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Right  
Application  
of Wealth**

to complete a great monument like St. Paul's, to bring across the country in a great aqueduct a perennial river, wide and deep, into London. There are a thousand poetic things which they might do, and they are not done. Their wealth revolves within the circle of their own property. The common, pedestrian prose of breeding it, like Shylock, is its effort and its aim. Its only poetry is self-expenditure.

If they would only live on a little higher level, what fame might be theirs! The fame which is hidden in the long gratitude of posterity; the fame which is not recorded by a statue erected by a tenantry, or by the splendour of a great house, or by the possession of a whole country as a deer forest, but by the incessant gratitude of the long succession of students from century to century who enter a college they have founded; or of the people who win from a national collection they have made, or a national building they have erected, new thought, new emotion, new beauty, new



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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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pleasure, as long as the race of those who love and think endures.

**The Right  
Application  
of Wealth**

I trust that time may come. I pray God that men who have wealth may think first of mankind, and, secondly, of themselves and their family. And I pray this for us all. For this is the law which should rule the possession of all property, small as well as large. This is the rule which should direct the world, even when the time comes, to which men more and more look forward, when all the wealth of England shall be in the possession, not of a few, but of the whole nation.

God's Fatherhood with man's childhood means for us as individuals, personal union with His character. It means that the inward aim of life is to be like God, to be able finally to say, "I and the Father are one." It means that we are to become that which in our highest hours we believe God to be : just, merciful, long-suffering,

**Christianity  
and Social  
Problems**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Christianity  
and Social  
Problems

truthful, pure, faithful, pitiful, and loving ; and to rule all our thoughts and actions at home, in business, in our profession, in our daily work, by our steady fulfilment in our character of the character of God.

What has that to do with social problems ? A great deal. Their true solution is in the growth of God's character in man : in the child becoming like the Father. In no other way will they ever be finally solved ; and all the ways proposed to solve them which lead away from this main law of their solution are ways which break down in practice, and create evils greater than those they have attempted to heal.

Put the matter to the test. Whatever be your business, merchant or lawyer, tradesman or mechanic, member of Parliament or manufacturer, town councillor, parson, or doctor, employer or employed—live out the character of God in your daily contact with men—live out justice and love, honest truth and pity in everything you do—and then,

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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Christianity  
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Problems

around your path at least, in the whole circle over which you have influence, the social problems which trouble us so much will be either solved, or put on the way to solution. As much of these problems as one man can meet and settle, you will meet and settle ; and what you do will spread from you in waves of influence. That is our personal duty, yours and mine, men or women. Try and do it. Try only one part of it at first. Try to do strict justice, not the mere justice of the civil law, but that which you are bold enough to claim as just before the eyes of the absolute justice of God. You will find that a multitude of things which regard labour and selling and buying and making money, and which earthly justice permits, God's justice lays its hand upon, and says, " This must not be done. The very opposite of it is the just thing to do."

When we obey that voice, we, so far as our life-practice is concerned, are solving day by day the social problems. But there is a wider view than the personal one.

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Christianity  
and Social  
Problems**

Societies, cities, states, as well as persons are bound to have their laws in harmony with the character of God. Is that the foundation of society? Are the social problems of the day met on that principle? Does Parliament act upon it? Do municipalities act upon it? Are the great questions of social and civic life brought to the bar of pure justice, of divine pity, of the whole of the character of God? If they were, would they be in the condition they are at present? If they were, you know well, they would be as different from what they are as light is from darkness.

The laws which regulate the relations between capital and labour were, in times past, shamelessly and cynically unjust. They are less unjust now, but they are far indeed from being in accord with our idea of divine justice. Till they are, we are not true children of God, and we are uncivilised. Till the character of God rules the decision of those questions which divide labour and capital, we shall touch no permanent solution

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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Christianity  
and Social  
Problems

of them ; and our condition will remain like that of the brutes left on an island surrounded by a flood. Self-interest, for the most part, rules those questions now. Self-giving ought to rule them. Wherever there is unmixcd self-interest there is injustice ; wherever there is self-giving there is justice. Progress to this conclusion of man's justice in harmony with God's justice will be slow ; it is perhaps better it should be slow. Ill-considered action, hasty or violent changes, unconstitutional measures, only put back the Kingdom of Justice. But to have the Spirit of God's justice in our heart as citizens, to live for it, to rule our life by it—that is right, and that will lead us aright in these matters. That is one illustration. States and towns, as corporate bodies, are children of God. Their acts and laws should be the embodiment of their Father's character. When they are, social problems will be solved. Till they are, these problems will torment the world.

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Christianity  
and Social  
Problems**

Another illustration may be given of the truth that the solution of social problems lies in the growth of God's character in man, in the child becoming like the Father.

There have been many revolts against oppression, many revolutions which began with the noblest ideas at their head. There has been an incessant struggle in Europe going on for the getting of justice, for redeeming the condition of the workers and the poor. Why have the revolutions so often failed? Why, when they succeeded, have they been followed, as the French Revolution was, by tyranny and despotism, by curses and not by blessings? It is because, when the oppressed people get the upper hand, they forget to be in harmony with the character of God. They fall, as the French Revolution fell, into revenge and hatred and cruelty. They put pity aside; they forget that the rich and the noble are children of God, and they treat them worse than captives. Forgiveness is the last thing France thought

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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of in her revolution, and the result of her being false to the character of God was the character of Napoleon established as the character of France, and the progress of the world put back instead of being put on, for at least fifty years.

**Christianity  
and Social  
Problems**

Why, in England, where so much liberty prevails that violent revolutions do not take place, is the struggle for a wiser, better, juster social condition so backward, so continually checked, hampered, and delayed? It is that it has not been kept close enough to the character of God. It is blocked by the intrusion of self-interest, where it ought to be ruled by brotherly love; and it will go on failing unless it be truer to love and pity, to honesty and truth, to high honour and to justice all round, to purity and righteousness of life, to reverence for the soul as well as for the body, to the imaginative and the spiritual in man as well as to the material wants of the body—to the character of God in mankind. If the leaders of the working men and labourers of England, when they

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Christianity  
and Social  
Problems**

get power, use it for their own interests alone, use it to win money or more power for themselves alone ; if they are thus false to the character of God—and if the people themselves, having won their strength, use their power without pity, without justice ; if they seek revenge ; if they are incapable of forgiveness ; if they forget that the capitalist and the comfortable middle class are, like themselves, children of God, and to be treated as brothers—their struggle will be of no use to the world, they will re-establish all the evils they fought against—love of power, greed of wealth, a base material life. All the villainies will take fresh life ; every social problem will be more difficult than before. O, at every step of the struggle, in the hour of victory, let us remember, if we care for humanity, to be true to the character of God, to be the children of our Father in heaven.



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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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No great practical work on the social problems can be done by the intellect alone. The soul must also be engaged in it ; the deep affections of humanity, the desire for the infinite, the outgoings of the imagination, the passion of religion, the hopes and faith which lead mankind at last to union with the love of God.

**The Passion  
of Religion  
in Social  
Work**

We gain the powers of the soul for our work for man when we believe in the third great truth of Christ ; that since all men are children of God, their Father redeems them all into union with His immortal life. Immortal life in love is the destiny of every child of man and to believe in that truth idealises all we do for man, and impassionates our work. There is nothing then that we do in love which is not taken up into God's work of redemption, which has not its infinite results, and which does not belong to the realms of imaginative joy. Every effort to better the lot of man is then done hand in hand with an

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Passion  
of Religion  
in Social  
Work

infinite Love and Goodness ; is part of the work of Christ, the lover of mankind. Such a faith bears us into the ideal world. The whole soul, with all its passion for the invisible and the perfect, with all its imaginations which outreach Time and Space, with all its desires for union with Love and Beauty, is then involved in our work.

Nor do we look only to the world to come for this. Immortal progress begins here ; and here, as well as beyond, we ought to labour and look for the New Jerusalem. Men tell us we are going on from bad to worse. There is no lie so useless, and so vile as that lie. We who believe in God's Fatherhood of man, in man's brotherhood, and in the final overthrow of evil, look forward to the steady bettering of man ; to the lessening of selfishness and the development of love ; to the growth of nobler principles in societies and states ; to the greater happiness of man ; to a human life which shall hate luxury, and be content

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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with simplicity, love beauty, and rejoice in giving ; in which every part shall live for the welfare of the whole. The dawn of that day already throws its light upward from the horizon. A higher conception of love moves already in the minds of men. What Christ meant is already better understood. His ideas are no longer only applied to our individual lives, but also to the life of societies, cities, states, and peoples. And the life of man not only hereafter but here on earth will be changed into something higher and lovelier than we have as yet conceived.

**The Passion  
of Religion  
in Social  
Work**

Cherish that ideal, children of God. Impassionate your life with its faith. Love it with all your heart. Labour for it with all your energy, believing in the goodness of God and the goodness of man. And think, as you work, with love, of Him who made this ideal clear, who laid its foundations deep, who now works with us and with His Father, and who said to us, for our comfort and our strength—"Lo, I am

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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with you always, even to the end of the world.”

### Religion in Civic Life

Were I a young man now and entering the ministry, I would certainly ravish some time away from philosophy, criticism, theology, and the history of religion, to study social conditions and ideals. The great religious question of the future will be the application of the principles of our religion to civic life, and by-and-by to politics. But civic life—that is, what kind of life the citizen is to lead, and on what principles it is to be conducted, so as to increase and develop on noble, just, and loving lines the happiness of the people—*that* will be the great religious question of the future.

We have had enough and to spare of individual Christianity. What we want now is civic Christianity. We sacrifice our selfish desires to reach holiness; we shall have to sacrifice readily another set

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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of them in order to heal the diseases and miseries of the commonweal. One of the most practical things a minister can do himself, and preach to his congregation, is to advance the cause of Civic Socialism, on the Christian ground that the suffering of one is the suffering of all, that the joy of one is the joy of all, that no man, as a citizen, liveth to himself or dieth to himself.

Religion in  
Civic Life

For that we shall have to expand our notion of love, and to carry it beyond mere charities and friendships and home life into the doing of justice in civic life ; and the doing of justice is the doing of love. If there is one thing which is neglected at present and needs preaching, it is pity ; not sentimental pity, but pity founded on a sense of justice different from that which prevails in the courts of law. And connected with love and pity, and equally needed for the promotion of noble citizenship, is the teaching of good manners, that good manners which arise out of the deep belief that all men

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Religion in  
Civic Life**

and women, from the king to the beggar, are one, are our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. There is nothing which needs more teaching in our schools, from Eton down to the village national school. There is also nothing which needs more to be taught to masters and mistresses of houses, to employers of labour, to shop-keepers, and, above all, to those who are called “ the upper classes.” I wish that many sermons were preached on that element of charity—“ doth not behave itself unseemly.” That, too, is a part of civic religion.

Another element in it needs our work. It is the extension of the love of beauty. I think that is one of the great wants of the whole of modern society. A man who wishes to really help the world to a higher life ought to educate himself in that ; to learn what beauty is, and the right way to find it ; to shape it and make it himself ; to learn how to enjoy it both in nature and in art ; and, having found it, to bring it into

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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religious, professional, business, and civic life ; to teach its reverence and confirm its influence. He can do that when he has learnt something of it himself ; and to learn it is as important as to learn all that science, history, and criticism have laid before us. To get men to see what is lovely, to admire it, to lose themselves in it, to desire to make it for themselves, to leave mechanism behind, and to use the powers of their soul in creating something with pleasure—that, too, is a part of civic religion.

Religion in  
Civic Life

When man began to toil, not his fall, but his salvation was begun. When he dug up his first thorns and cleared his first field of thistles, and in the work his sweat fell heavy on the rescued soil, his blessing and not his curse began, his joy and not his sorrow ; for labour ends in delight, and is the only mother of true rest ; and it is by what a thing ends in, and not by what it is while it is being

The  
Blessing  
of Labour

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The  
Blessing  
of Labour

done, that we judge the thing—whether it is blessing or curse.

Out of the noble pains of labour, struggling with all the reluctant elements of nature and spirit, have streamed into humanity all the blessings it has loved and rejoiced in,—all knowledge, all discovery, the interests which awake and kindle us, poetry and art, law, civil order, the gentleness and greatness of life, the high conceptions of the imagination and the spirit, all our grasp of nature, and all our grasp of God. Little would we care to go on, were it not for the difficulties ; little would we care for the results, if we had not won them with trouble ; little would we care for rest, if it were not filled with the exulting memories of labour. And well our Father knew that when He imposed on humanity the blessing of labour.

And in the greatest labour of all—in the labour of the personal soul to be at one with God, in the vast labour of all humanity towards union with Him from whom it has



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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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flowed, and in whom it will abide for ever—there is contained the greatest blessing of the future. In that noble world to come there will be no blessing so great as to remember, as to look back on the mighty toil by which man wrought himself into God, the struggle by which we won, unless it be this—that, having learnt how to conquer the pain of labour, we shall labour for ever with delight. Incessant creation, accomplished with unfailing power and joy, is that perfection of labour which is rest.

**The  
Blessing of  
Labour**

To go on for years in patient poverty, striving to obey existing law, but always looking forward to a better society ; living without any hope of enjoying that better time, yet—when there is a fair chance of gaining an advantage for the cause, or when oppression and suffering are too much to be borne without degradation—resisting, through starvation unto death, the laws which oppress them ; not only for the sake

**Self-Sacri-  
fice of  
Working  
Men**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Self-sacrifice of  
Working  
Men

of the whole body of workers now, but also for the sake of a happier life for their comrades in the future; maintaining steadfastly the ideas which will liberate their class and their cause, though they will never see the fruits of their sacrifices,—this is what the working men of this country have faithfully, patiently, and honourably done for many, many years against the world. It is the habit of men whose sole aim is to look after their own interests to scoff at a life lived for ideas which they call sentimental, or lived for a cause which has its ends in the distant future; but the fact is that, were it not for this ideal and sacrificing temper in all classes in England, there would be no England at all. Those who have that temper, and act it, are the life by which the country lives; and these scoffers, who are the disease of the land, would have, without the vitalising work of self-sacrifice, no living matter in the nation on which the disease of self-interest could feed. It is the habit also to scoff

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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at the working men, and to say that it is absurd to impute to them these fine feelings for their class and for the future, and that their conduct is selfish, not unselfish. Had their conduct been selfish they would have had more worldly success; and it is false to say that they do not live for those ideas which are the hands and feet and voice of the great cause of the future happiness of man. The fact is that they are the only large class that at present have any ideas likely to be of avail in the future. The aristocratic class are living for the past and its ideas—ideas once alive, now dead. The middle class and the plutocrats who are its sultans, are living for the present and themselves, and the widest charity cannot credit them with ideas.

Self-sacrifice of  
Working  
Men

A “living wage” does not mean a wage which will enable men only just to support life, and to be sufficiently healthy to enable the proprietors to get all the work

A Living  
Wage

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### A Living Wage

out of them needed for the market—a meaning for a “living wage” which long existed in England, and which was the parent of a serfdom worse by far than any practised under feudalism. It means more than that. It means a wage which will enable the workers to live a decent life, under decent conditions, to be able to have in old age the just value of their work when they can work no more, to have something over for self-education, to be able to secure happiness for their women. This is their claim ; for this men who strike and half starve are fighting day by day ; and they are fighting not only their own battle, but the battle of all the working men and women of England. No one imagines that this principle, once accepted—a principle which hits straight at the very keystone of the old political economy—will exhibit itself only in one or two industries. It will run like a fire into every trade, and especially into those where the workers suffer most from the conditions of their labour. And

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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it will not rest. Even when the strikers are defeated their defeat will not prevent the action of that principle; battle after battle will be fought under its banner till it be established. And surely no demand can be more just than this. Though it has taken long to formulate it, it stands, when once formulated, so clear and just that it will catch on to the moral sense of mankind—even to that of its opponents. The time has passed when the conscience of the comfortable classes was satisfied by hearing that the workers had enough wages on which to avoid starvation. The time has passed when the workers themselves believed that Capital had rights over their bodies and souls because it had might. The men have now a higher view of duty. They owe a duty to their whole class and to the future of humanity; and the duty is to claim out of the wealth they make for the country enough on which to live a decent and happy life, and to establish that principle for

**A Living  
Wage**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### A Living Wage

all time. It is the most just of demands, and justice is bound to grant it. It is not only the coal-owners who are bound to grant it, and who in time will be forced to grant it: it is the whole of England, that whole body politic the organisation of whose representation we sometimes call the State. The nation will have that demand forced on it, and it will be obliged to find a way out in which justice to its workers can be done. I do not think that the question could possibly have been formulated in a more useful way than in the coal trade, because coal is a national necessity.

### Heredity

The evil we do by self-indulgence does not end with ourselves. It is handed on by us from generation to generation. Enough of that is true, even if we take note of the denials of the extremes into which the doctrine of heredity has been driven. Give way to appetite, to heavy eating or drinking, to sloth, and the direction you have

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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established in your body, and the ills apper- **Heredity**  
taining to it, will appear in various forms  
and strength in your children, and, if they  
yield to the hereditary tendency, will be  
handed on, increased, to their children.  
Encourage in yourself any passion—lust or  
despair, the habit of taking revenge, the  
habit of claiming your own will as always  
the best, the habit of violent speaking (I  
mention only evil things)—and you send  
them down to others not so strong as  
yourself, and it is possible sow in them  
seeds of which madness may be the fruit.  
Live the weak, violent, merely impulsive  
life, which is so common, and your children  
may be born with a tendency to live in  
the same way. Much of the future hangs  
on your action—the future of those whom  
most you love—part of the future of all  
with whom they come into contact. That  
is the new extension of the duty of self-  
control which Science has made more definite  
for us. It is her contribution to that higher  
self-sacrifice which says : Give up evil not

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Heredity** only for your own sake, but for the sake of the human race. No man liveth to himself or dieth to himself.

Let every man and woman keep this in view, and so live as to do no harm to the race that follows him. It was wrong to break down one's mind or body by vice, while one thought that it was only oneself who was injured; but now that we know that our punishments are repeated in the bodies and minds of those we bring into the world, now that we know that the diseased body and mind we have made for ourselves are imposed on innocent and helpless creatures, whom we doom to misery, it is a foul dishonour to indulge ourselves at so murderous a risk, nay, at so murderous a certainty. We ought to live for the world that is to come after us.

I do not think it is too much to say that all fathers and mothers, and all who are likely to marry, are bound in almost every action of their lives to think not only of the present, with all its duties, but also of what



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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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effect their acts will have upon the children **Heredity** they will bring into the world. If Science teaches us anything with a clear voice, that is what it teaches, and its teaching is backed up by the Christian doctrine, now held by anti-Christians as well, that we are to live, right through all acts, with the constant thought of others in our mind, with the thought of our duty to the whole human race. We have no right to say that we live for the world to come in heaven till we have first lived day by day for the world to come upon this earth—so lived for it as to hand down a sane, well-tempered mind, a pure conscience, a soul full of aspiration, and a sound body, to our descendants. When we have done that as well as we can, why, then, we have gained some right to long for immortality. We shall have gained one immortality—an immortality of gratitude in the human race—and we shall then be worthy of another.

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Arresting  
"Family  
Fallings"**

When fathers or mothers see reproduced in their children their own failing of appetite or temper, or when they suspect its presence, a steady, continuous effort should be directed against this hereditary trouble, not so as to make the children conscious of it, but by the training of the opposite qualities, if it be a mental trouble or one of temperament ; and by abstinence, practised by themselves and imposed on the children, if it be a matter of appetite ; and by steady treatment directed to strengthening the resistant physical forces, if it be a matter of disease. In three or four generations an evil taint, if it be steadily encountered, dies out ; and every parent who knows his duty or hers, does his best to make each of his children a step in the regeneration of his family to health, to a sane mind, to usefulness for man. This is the duty Science imposes ; it is a duty God and man long since imposed on parents ; but one has hopes that, now that Science has spoken, God and man may be more listened

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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to by the private selfishness, folly, indifference, and despotism of homes. I have known parents, when their children flew into a raging temper, talk of the family failing, as if that were an excuse for their not seeing in that fury the germ of madness. I have known parents, conscious that they had a love for drinking, urge drink upon their children. These incredible follies are only not incredible wickedness because they are thoughtless acts. But what right have parents to be thoughtless? Thoughtlessness is a crime. They have no right any longer to plead thoughtlessness. They have turned a deaf ear to God. He is far away; perhaps, they think, He does not exist. They have turned a deaf ear to man. "How can man prove," they say, "that our private lives have any effect on his progress?" But now that Science has spoken, they can be deaf no longer; their duty is driven home. And it is the same duty that God and man have long since demanded from them.

Arresting  
"Family  
Failings"

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**True  
Patriotism**

The true conception of a state is the same as St. Paul's conception of the Christian Church. It is a single body of diverse members, of different values, with each his own work ; every member of which is responsible for the health of the whole, and bound, in due proportion, to contribute to the whole. The wealthier, the more intelligent, the higher the position of the members, the larger the duties and the greater the demands made on their conscience and on their possessions. The wealth, the position, the intelligence, are not their own, to do what they like with ; they belong first to the whole, and only afterwards to their possessors, if even then ; and they do so by even a kind of legal right, for their possession, or their power of being used, is only secured to their owners by the work of the whole people, and chiefly by the work of those who are less rich and less intelligent. Therefore the moment any disease or difficulty occurs in any part of the state,

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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either by the fault of that part or by the neglect by the more wealthy part of its duties, those who are best off and less diseased are bound to help that part to recover, to provide means by combined work whereby it may be in good health, to give freely, by laws freely made by the whole, money, time, work—all, in fact, that makes up capital—to set the sick part of the state to rights. And this is not their privilege only, or their charity. It is their absolute duty and their wisdom : their duty because they who suffer are fellow-citizens ; their wisdom because the sickness of any part is a danger to the whole state.

True  
Patriotism

The only knowledge a number of well-to-do folk have of the lives of the poor is drawn from the police reports—that is, from that class among the poor which is improvident and drunken and criminal. This is what comes before their eyes ; and thinking, as many think, that poverty is always the nurse

The Con-  
dition of  
the Poor

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Condi-  
tion of the  
Poor**

of evil, they imagine this to be the normal condition of the poor. If it were so, London would be wrecked to-morrow. The real state of the case is that the great majority are men and women of very noble lives, loving and helpful to one another, sacrificing themselves for others in a way unknown to us, active and in work every hour of the day, honest, peaceful, and for the most part godfearing, extraordinarily grateful for kindness when it is given humanly and not flung at them as if from an upper level, full of fortitude and endurance, of faith and hope. They have their faults, their vices; but except in those who have given themselves over to brutal vice—and these are not the most poor—their vices are not so base as the vices of the vicious rich. The battle of their lives makes them more romantic. They are capable of poetic feeling, of ideals, of fine and noble sentiment. They are nearer to the spirit of the life that Jesus lived, and to the humility and grace which listen to the call of God,

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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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than are the many who despise or ignore their condition. You will take this out of them if you preach to them "Cursed are the poor," if you make them think that poverty is the worst of all things and wealth the best, if you make the possession of material good the test of blessedness. No greater wrong could be done to a nation than this.

**The Condi-  
tion of the  
Poor**

I may say this boldly, for every one knows that I have not preached to them contentment with their outward lot, or stated that it was not wicked of the state to leave them in it. That is a different thing. They are bitterly wronged, and the wrong ought to be redressed. It is the first duty of the English people. But I hope they will strive to keep, in all their struggles to a life of less misery, the spirit of the kingdom of God—the spirit most of them now possess; and no man ought to preach to them any doctrine which will damage or destroy that spirit. To say to them that poverty is accursed and wealth blessed is to sow seeds which are dragon's

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Condi-  
tion of the  
Poor

teeth, and which will not only devour the heart of England, but produce a ghastlier mass of poverty than even now besets us.

The Keep-  
ing of  
Beauty

The beauty which lives in nature, as a spirit in a body, is made more beautiful to us when it is associated with the noble doings of men in the past. The beauty which lives like a spirit in the art of man is made more beautiful by the noble thought and emotion of the men who created it in the past. It is our duty and our delight to grasp all this loveliness of the past, and to keep it as a force for life in our soul. But our duty does not end there. While we thus glorify the present by the beauty of the past, we are bound also to live in and for beauty in the present, that we may hand it on to the future. It is our work not only to preserve what is beautiful and love it, but to make what is beautiful for the sake of those who will come after us. No present life is complete which is not also lived for the use and pleasure of



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## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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the men and women whom we know not, but to whom our duty stands clear. None of our work should be only useful to ourselves, or pleasurable only to our own society. We should take care that the useful things we do should also be graciously and beautifully done, that they may carry on beyond ourselves the tradition of grace and beauty. Every house we build, every change we make in the ordering of our property, every book we write, everything we make, should be made and done, not for a momentary purpose, but also for the joy and good of those to come, and with as much of the sense of beauty and of its need for man directing us as of the sense of use. Preserve and love the beauty of the past, but create beauty for the future. Then we shall ennoble ourselves. For while we thus take into ourselves, for the sake of self-forgetfulness, all that is useful and beautiful in the humanity behind us, with us, and before us, we shall also build, or there will be built in us (for when we are self-forgetful there is a Great Architect

The Keep-  
ing of  
Beauty

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Keep-  
ing of  
Beauty

who labours in us), the noble temple of a character worthy to last in the human race and in Almighty God. Men in the future will see that building, and be stirred by its beauty, grandeur, or serenity into desire to build themselves also into use and loveliness for the joy of those that are to come.

We move in the present forwards on our path. As we walk, we touch with one hand and draw into ourselves all the beauty of the past, that we may love it and make it loved; and with the other hand we touch the future, sending into it with all our power all that we can feel and make of beauty. In such a life all work is beautiful and all beauty is work; and because the beautiful is always derived from love, its work is religion, for religion is the worship of love.

## IV

### *THE OUTLOOK—HERE AND HERE- AFTER*

No one can say that calm is not better than battle, that the repose of the haven is not better than the sleepless watch in the hurricane, when the calm is not the lifeless calm of stagnation but the moving peace of a great current, when the haven is not the indifference of apathy but a home with God, who gives to us our work in life, and bids us do it with that intensity which specially belongs to the ardent nature of which I speak. For that intensity is not crushed ; we feared it once, but now we prize it, for it gives to all our labour power ; and being now, not master, but servant of the will, it deepens the quiet that once it destroyed, and in quietude and power is wrought the best work of the world.

Peace after  
Storm

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Peace after  
Storm

But how far, how very far away such a life seems to many of us! It appears as if nothing could ever still the stormy sea within. Ere one storm has subsided another begins, till there are times when, reeling to and fro between right and pleasure, when driven to our wits' end, we call upon the Lord for calm.

To some who die young the answer is death, and for them there is no other answer. The Italians have an epitaph—"Ella implora pace"—and few words have more fully expressed the long distress of a stormy life, and the passionate desire for rest; for it is not the living that implores, but the dead. "Death has made a change; I may be different; rest could not be on earth for me, but now, in this new life, circumstances may be happier, and all things more kind. My heart may find its haven, and be glad."

For the rest of us, who are not quite so passionate, or who live longer, we may hope for peace in this world. Much wears out,

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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but I trust only the evil and folly in the ardours of our nature, not the ardours themselves ; for the repose which is gained by the rooting up of any element in our nature is a vile repose ; where a tree should wave in the forest of our life, there is a ragged hole and a sullen pool. That is not a source of gladness. Get rid of no natural element of your character in your search for peace.

Peace after  
Storm

Much also is gained by change, not in the elements that cause storm, but by the addition of new powers to our nature, or by the growth of undeveloped powers. We get new and higher motives, which lead our life into brighter and holier paths ; we attain right aims, supplant unwise by wise enthusiasms ; so that nothing good in the past is lost, but is taken up and forms part of the new life. And then, instead of a life of calms followed by tempests, we are driving, in the noble peace of activity, every sail drawing, before a steady wind, not to reach the haven yet, but to sail on ; and

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Peace after  
Storm

while we live here, that is better than the haven.

And this is God's work, our Father, who knows our frame, who remembers that we are dust, who hears our cry, who is not hard to mark our failures, our changes of mood towards Him, while we are struggling in the storm. For He will bring us to Himself at last ; and it is best, perhaps, for us, that we should reach our rest slowly. Wherefore He brings a thousand influences to bear upon us. Day by day little things touch us, and lead us on, towards quiet. Old memories are awakened of ancient peace ; drifting touches of emotion come, which pass like summer clouds, but add their influence of calm. Deep happiness in things which stir no wild feeling ; in the beauty of the spring, in the majesty of storm, in the solemn tenderness of evening on the hills ; benign whispers of grace from Him that we scarcely recognise at first as His voice ; warnings in our own soul, so tender that we scarcely know them, for reproof ; impressions of the beauty of

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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holiness and self-conquest, of what it may be to be at one with Him, coming and going, but leaving a new note in the character, so that an ideal life grows before us for our contemplation ; influences which, though mingled, come to us from the human love which He sends us when we need it, and which give us aspiration ; hopes for the future, which, however we distrust them, subtly allure us into activity,—these are the ways in which He redeems us all our life long, and brings us to the haven where we would be. Slowly, surely, the waves grow still, the storm becomes a calm, impetuosity changes into active energy : energy for God and man brings the repose of duty.

Peace after  
Storm

Even before old age we reach the harbour of a quiet life, and are glad because we are at rest. Then we look back and thank Him for His goodness ; our soul feels sure of His love. Has it not been wonderful in unhasting wisdom, in unresting love ? We wait in peace for death ; we abide and live in

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Peace after  
Storm

gladness of love ; our heart is full of beautiful things—of faiths secured, of hopes which are sunshine, of things that haunt the silence of the breast,

Imaginations calm and fair,  
The memory like a cloudless air,  
The conscience like a sea at rest.

So He bringeth us to the haven where we would be.

The Testing  
of Christ's  
Disciples

There were among the followers of Jesus those who looked for an earthly kingdom. There are those who follow Him now for the same reason. Yet, it is nothing but superstition to worship God, to follow Christ, for the sake of success. And the proof does not loiter, for ere long men find themselves out, and know their religion to be a lie. The moment God disappoints the bargainer's expectation, the moment misfortune comes, this bubble of religion collapses. He has staked his God on his



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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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success. With the loss of success he loses his God. "Was it for this," said the negro to his fetish, when he lost his liberty, "that every morning I offered you the choicest fruits? Is this all you can do?" And he flung his god into the river. That is the natural end of the bargain of self-interest with God. The religion it claims to be is as gross a superstition as the fetish-worship of the savage—and well indeed did Jesus Christ when, testing keenly, He made those followers of His depart who joined Him in hope of an earthly kingdom.

The Testing  
of Christ's  
Disciples

Another band of followers clung to Christ for the sake of signs and wonders. Their acceptance of His truth depended on the evidence of their senses. Without proof positive—and proof positive was something they could see and demonstrate—they could not believe. The idea then went for nothing without the arguments. There was no answer within them to the truth He spoke, nothing which made them cry, "This is life eternal," when they heard Christ declare,

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Testing  
of Christ's  
Disciples

“Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God. Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. If ye are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye.”

Of what possible use were folk like this to Christ ? Of what use have the rest of their type ever been in any cause which, like that of all religions or of all arts, issues forth from ideas that cannot be demonstrated ? If the miracle-mongers and the scientific folk, who are both at one in demanding demonstrative proof of spiritual truth, were to intrude on the minds of all men and make their views prevail, art, religion, poetry, music, enthusiasm for new thought, the devotion to the ideal, would sink to the lowest ebb. These would revive, of course, after a time, for men could not long suffer from so direful a disease without wishing to be cured ; but it might take a century to redeem a nation whose true life had suffered so dreadful a collapse.

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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If you who have worked, and thought of God's kingdom and not your own—how is your heart in later years? What has become of your young hopes and young ideals, in which, when you began life, you thought you saw the face of God? Why, they are there, as fresh, as bright with dew, as eagerly looking forward as they were thirty years ago. The transient forms you have thrown them into may have failed or seemed to fail. For their sake you have suffered again and again the cross. Because you would not give them up, or spoil them with falsehood or inconstancy or worldliness or force, you have had to endure many things too hard to tell. But their outward failure has only made you believe them more. Your suffering for them has only made you love them more. Your refusal to spoil them has deepened your inward joy in them. You have kept love, kept constancy, kept faith, and kept righteousness—kept the kingdom of God. Therefore

**The  
Enduring  
Kingdom**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The  
Enduring  
Kingdom

rejoice, whatever be your pain ! For you will not lose life, and when the troublous times are gone, there will be not only peace, but also a fountain of joy within. Love makes all things loving, and purity all things pure. The whole world will seem like a garden in the dew of a summer dawn. Could we but love enough, and be righteous enough, our life, spite of all sorrow, would be like a child's who runs rejoicing into the woods to gather flowers in the morning for those he loves.

Those who thus live set up a kingdom of God among men. Mankind is always fresh to them and fair ; therefore they have no despair. They love, and their love makes men loving. They are good, and they see goodness in men, and touch it into life. They are alive through goodness and love, and they give and spread life. To be with them is to believe again—if we have ever lost belief—in God, in mankind, in life, in victory over pain and care, in the resurrection of joy, in the conquest of sin.

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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Wherever they go, they bring light and comfort. They have their kingdom in the hearts of men, and it is the kingdom of God.

The  
Enduring  
Kingdom

And that is the kingdom that endures. It is true ; and Truth is eternal. Neither moth nor rust corrupt it as they corrupt the kingdom of wealth. It is not like the fashion of this world that passeth away. Its power is not imposed from without, but grows from within. To be one of that pure and quiet and loving assembly ought to be enough for us. Life is fleeting, and it is not worth while, unless an inward power of genius drive us, to fill it with that cruel labour after fame which, when we have gained it, passes from our hands. It is never worth while to fill our life with selfish effort, with the toil for wealth ; but it is worth while to fill it with love and righteousness, with meekness, and with peace-making, with humbleness of heart, with hunger of soul for God, with faithful work for God and man.

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Human  
Nature is  
Divine

It was a wonderful thing for the world when an authoritative voice declared that all the noble impulses, all the acts that saved through love, all the truth and justice, pity and purity of man, were absolutely, in their source, divine, and might ascend to their source and realise their union with it. For this was the thing that weighed heaviest on man : that he was not sure—since these divine things in him were so easily slipped away from, since their efforts were so broken, since it seemed so impossible to bring them to perfection—that they were really divine, that they made him akin to God.

Christ took this burden away. In the truths I tell you, He said, all these powers in you will run like angel messengers up to God. And this is the main truth—*Your nature is divine*. These things and powers in you are of God, and are destined to be made perfect in Him. There is not an impulse of goodness, not an ideal of righteous-

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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ness, not one cry of sweet compassion, not one aspiration towards inconceivable life, love, light, and beauty, which shall not be realised at last in God. Let them mount now like angels to God. They will find in Him their home.

Human  
Nature is  
Divine

That was a wonderful hope and faith, a new force, indeed, thrown into the heart of mankind ; a greater thing, indeed, than all miracles and signs. It acted at once. No one can tell the mighty impulse given to the progress of man, when he came to know and believe as a truth that all that he half felt to be divine in him was really divine ; was destined not to die, but live, and increase in living for ever ; was not to struggle hopelessly here, and perish unfulfilled, but to win its victory and reach its perfect attainment in God, from whom it came.

Life was then made tenfold worth the living. Right, Love, Truth, and Purity were no longer accidents of our nature, but eternal essences of it ; and they took a hundredfold development in action. It

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Human  
Nature is  
Divine

became easy to die for these things, for one died only to live in them more fully. And all inward and outward life, while it kept its work in the world below, ran upwards incessantly on the celestial way that Jesus made, like a troop of angels, to the Father, by whom and in whom it lived.

The Race  
set before  
us

Recall in this whirl of life, whose noise and materialism would deafen the ears of the spirit—recall the vision of the text, “We are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.” Out of sight, but in most real existence, a cloud of witnesses encompasses you. Solemn beautiful faces ; solemn with the calm of eternal righteousness, alit with the ardent movement of eternal love, beautiful with the light of holiness triumphant, impassioned with desire for your victory—these are watching you in your race ! Let the thought awaken your heart and sanctify your life, bring you some



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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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strength to endure in trial, some courage to do your duty.

**The Race  
set before  
us**

It is impossible to say that the dead have no influence on our lives. They touch us from the Past. Their living soul is flashed on ours. We walk through life like men who make their way through an alpine valley, dark below, but from the upper edge of whose precipices sweeps back an upland country bathed in light. Thither come to us far beneath, the whispers of the upper hills: sweet waters that fall down and carry with them flowers unknown below; and through the serried pines, sometimes the flashing of a light unspeakable. For so to us arrive at hours, when the soul is intent, the mystic hints, the rare voices, the inspiration whence we know not, of that vast world of souls beyond, of the great and good made perfect.

But in no mysterious, magical way, vouchsafed only to a few initiated. The way is the common way whereby thought touches thought on earth; and the initiation is a

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Race  
set before  
us

heart calm and pure, an imagination untainted, a "conscience like a sea at rest." There are no visible signs of this communion, they would but desecrate it ; no manifestations to the sense, for these things are the property of the spirit ; but in ineffable nearness of sympathy and cheer and comfort, in the vitalising and soothing strength that the more perfect character gives to the less perfect, we win a power we know not in temptation ; a quiet which keeps us apart from the crowd that whirls its noisy dance around its gods of money and of fashion ; an encouragement to live on when life seems over-worried ; courage, animation, out of which springs patience in the race—till at last, so present does become this invisible world, so real, so constant, so living, that we see as it were the writer's vision, row on row around us, climbing a mighty amphitheatre, the noble army of martyrs, the goodly fellowship of all the saints, praising God, and among them One, the Leader and the Perfecter of Faith, like

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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to a Son of Man, who, watching us, cries out with joy and love, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

**The Race  
set before  
us**

Therefore seeing that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

The salvation of our nature lies in our will becoming a powerful and righteous will, which shall guide all qualities in us towards their true goal—the will of God becoming at one with our will. That this was possible was shown to us in our own nature in Christ: "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." In Him, in the history of human nature, the will of man coincided with God's will: the nature of man was kept as it ought to be, entirely good. Perversions, if they tended to take place, were checked and stopped, and sin did not take form within Him. We see, then, in Him that

**"Our Wills  
are ours"**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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“ Our Wills  
are ours ”

which we ought to be now ; we see that which we shall be hereafter when the righteousness of God has taken up its unquestioned throne within our will, and our human qualities, kept in harmony with good, are driven incessantly by a righteous will into union with the Father.

That is to be our divine destiny. Why we and all humanity are put through the severity of the battle to attain it, why we begin in imperfection, why this defectiveness exists in our nature, why there is this tendency to slip out of right into wrong, is the great problem, the answer to which we shall not find completely in this world ; but the fact lies before us that we *are* defective, and whatever conclusion we may arrive at from that fact, it is at least our duty as men to struggle to trample out our perverse tendency to wrong and to establish ourselves in righteousness. And when we realise that, we ought also to realise that we are not alone in the struggle. The Spirit of

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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God is with us, kindling and encouraging. "Our Wills  
Divine power adds itself to our power, are ours"  
which itself is also of God; and that is  
begun in us which will finally harmonise  
our will with the will of God. When that  
is done, our redemption will be fulfilled;  
the defect will be eradicated, the original  
idea of our nature realised.

Some years ago, travelling in North Italy, A Vision of  
I came to Mantua, and stayed there for a Life  
day. When I had seen the palaces, I went  
down through the massive gate on to the  
long bridge over the lake that throws its  
arm half round the city, and sat upon the  
parapet and looked into the water. The  
river Mincio flows through it, and its motion  
keeps the lagoon clear. I could see down  
into the depths of it, as if I were looking  
through moving crystal. And the solemn  
transparent water, and the silent and dead  
town, and the weird and lonely desolation  
of the banks, entered into me, and I felt as

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**A Vision of  
Life**

if I belonged no longer to the world, but to a dream. Then, as I gazed down, shapes began to form in the water, and to become pictures, and like a dream procession, very swiftly, but with marvellous vividness, my whole life, from childhood upwards, seemed to pass by in the clear water. I had no will in this ; the vision came as it would come in sleep, from without myself, and as sometimes happens in a dream I wondered what would follow, and did not know. The water knew more of my life than I knew myself. As the later years passed by, I did expect what was coming, but even here that apartness of the consciousness from the things seen which was characteristic of this fantastic experience still continued, and the tales of the later years were presented in a different way than I had expected. I did not know whether the water was more true than I, but I know I was incessantly surprised. At last, it all passed away ; I lifted my head, and saw again the surface waters, and the grey walls, and the red light of

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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evening, and heard the solitary fisher's cry. A Vision of  
Life  
But the impression remained—I have never forgotten it—and an hour afterwards I looked again, when the evening had deepened, hoping to see the same vision a second time; but the water only reflected the clouds above, and its depths were troubled. What had been was no more.

Is that what life will be like hereafter? Shall we look into the clear waters of that far-off land and see our life on earth pass by, and scarcely know what it is, and be surprised, see it only as if it had been a dream—as perhaps it is—and not recognise ourselves therein as ourselves; and yet seem to know that it was all true, but so far away, that it is as if we read in an old book the story of another like our own? Is it possible that we are, here, so much the stuff that dreams are made of, that, when we wake up into the more vivid life, we shall see all the past of earth like shadows in the water?

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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A Vision of  
Life

Or shall we, then, when we thus half remember, half behold, the events of bygone life, be surprised to find all those events changed from that we thought them to be when we were involved in them—so different will be the light of that other world, so different the feeling in our own hearts by which we see them? If so, I can well fancy that the revelation might sometimes be happy and sometimes unhappy; that hours we thought all sorrowful here may seem then full of joy; and hours which here we thought to be crowned with all delight will then seem dark with pain?

Or shall we be so alive, so full of reality, as to know that all we lived on earth was dreamland in comparison; and striving sometimes to recall the vision of the past, find ourselves, in the rushing of new life, in the new movement of fresh joy and noble passions, unable to see again what once seemed so eager and so sweet that we could not believe it to be a dream?

It may be, I can well fancy it so; for so



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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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it is sometimes even in our life on the earth. The past becomes like visions in the water. When we see it, it is not what it was ; and if the new be keen, we cannot, though we strive, see, after a time, even the vision of the old.

A Vision of  
Life

Before Christ's time, there was no bond of union between different peoples, except that of subjection ; nay, rather, men of different nations were natural enemies. After His time, the moment a man became a Christian, he became in idea the brother of all other Christians. The Jew and the Gentile, the Roman and the Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, the slave and his master, the Roman matron and the poor Syrian woman—all nations, castes, classes of society, all classes of women as well as of men, were united in a common name, in a common nation, in a common citizenship and a common love to one another and to God, in the Man Christ Jesus. It was no unreal

The Great  
Things  
Christ hath  
Wrought

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**The Great  
Things  
Christ hath  
Wrought**

bond, but one made active, charitable, real, in every city and every land where went the story and the gospel of the Lord. Of course the idea was contradicted again and again in the carrying out of it ; that is the fate of all great ideas. It was most contradicted when the Church became imperialised and woven into a system of castes. But, nevertheless, the idea was working on behind the false systems which overlaid the true spirit of Jesus, and it is living now in the vast results which it has never ceased to work out through the centuries.

The little Church of Christ was the first international society, the first republican brotherhood, the first equality. And all our political struggle towards the conception of one nation, the nation of mankind, in which all citizens are free, equal, and fraternal, not because of their rights being the same, but because of their belief in the common duties which men owe to one another, is but the working out in society and politics of this mighty atonement of nation to nation which

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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Christ set on foot in the realm of the spirit of man when He bound the whole of those who believed in His tidings about God into one Church by a common love of God, by a common following of His own spirit, by a common belief that, since they were sons of God, they were brothers one of another.

The Great  
Things  
Christ hath  
Wrought

The noble work of this idea still moves on ; and as the day will come when all shall be at one with God from the least to the greatest, so the day shall also come when all men, from the beginning of the human race until its completion, shall know and love their unity. This is part of the work of Christ's Atonement—the Reconciliation of Man.

But there was one hatred which men had, and have now, which it seemed impossible to destroy. Hatred of suffering in ourselves, in others ; hatred of death as the last and bitterest of pains. Pain by itself—independent of reasons why it is to be borne—physical, and still more mental pain, is the

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Great  
Things  
Christ hath  
Wrought

hateful thing. Can man ever be reconciled to that ?

There were two things before Christ's time which had made pain seem beautiful. One was Conscience ; the other was Love. Uncounted thousands of men and women had died and suffered for the love of those they loved, but not for those beyond the outgoings of personal love. Men also had for centuries—men, too, quite ignorant that what urged them to die was an atomic habit—rejoiced to suffer or die for what they thought right and true, for ideas likely to benefit their people ; and they had found in their inward thoughts of right a strange joy which enabled them to overcome or despise the suffering. These were the great souls of the world ; but it was not supposed that many could or ought to do this. Suffering did not bring this kind of joy to all men.

But Christ declared by His life and death—and it was one of those daring generalisations that lift Him so far above all other

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prophets—that this which had arisen, here and there among men, was the highest duty and law of life ; that it was to be obeyed and fulfilled, not only by the philosopher and the hero, but by the child, the woman, the common citizen, the slave, the savage. Nor was there one of them who was not capable of this, not one who in this way of suffering for righteousness, or for the love of ideas useful to men, might not have all the noble calm of the philosopher, and all the splendid joy of the hero. “Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.”

The Great  
Things  
Christ hath  
Wrought

Only Christ swept the particular motive into the universal by making this duty depend on love, not only of those naturally dear to us, but also of all mankind ; not one's own people alone or of one's own class, but of the life, honour, and advance of all mankind, even of those who seemed to hate us and to put us to death. It was in this spirit that the Christian, even

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Great  
Things  
Christ hath  
Wrought**

were he only a slave, endured torture and death for the sake of conscience and love, and finding in himself a reconciliation to all the sufferings he bore, was the means of reconciling other men to suffering. How wide-spread this reconciliation of men to suffering and death became is plainly laid before us in history.

**The Rest  
which Re-  
maineth**

There is no recompense of rest till all is over. Alas ! we are not strong enough or true enough always to bear this law. We want our rewards before we have done half we might do ; are indignant if we do not see the fruit upon the tree ; ask for worldly happiness in requital of spiritual goodness ; cry even like children for our sweetmeats, and are angry if we do not have them. If, after having fulfilled one duty, we are not allowed to sit down and rest, but find new duties, new work, rising each day out of the old, we fly like Jonah in the face of God to avoid some new call upon our hearts ; or

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like Elijah, become petulant, and cry, "O Lord, take away my life;" or sink into a weary despair, ignorant and unmanly as we are.

The Rest  
which Re-  
maineth

But we must awaken into a truer view of life, and have the spirit to endure hardness, like a good soldier of Jesus Christ. For all our wailing will not change the fact that life is a battle, and that if we are not soldiers we must be useless. Whether we like it or no, the battle will rage, and the *mêlée* be hot around us. And the only way to get joy out of it is to spring heartily into the fight; is to take up the work with ardour; is to make trial itself the source of stern delight by heroic contest with it. That is the only reward you will have here; but it is quite a sufficient one. And when the battle is won, then your rest will be won—the exact result, the natural fruit of that which has been done; the harvest hour when God will gather into His garner the wheat you have grown, and men will feed upon its bread! What matter that you

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Rest  
which Re-  
maineth

went forth in tears, that in the sweat of your face you ploughed and sowed, that in constant watching and warfare you brought the corn to ripeness. For now the hour is come when beneath the harvest moon of death, with laden wains, you shall go home, and the Master will gird Himself to receive you, and give you at last, give to finished work, the supper of His Eternal Rest.

And dear and beautiful that deep repose will be, none the less dear for all the trouble and the battle. I do not say that the greatness of our enjoyment of the rest that remaineth is in proportion to the greatness of our endeavour ; for that would imply that the rest of Heaven is inactivity. But I do say that in proportion as we do our work well, the idea of what rest is grows a higher one ; and with the development of the idea of rest, develops also our capacity for enjoying it. For as we go on steadily battling, steadily working, we get ease in doing our fighting and our labour ; and with ease of doing comes enjoyment of doing,



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and sense of mastery ; and the ease, and the enjoyment, and the mastery are things that increase also, till at last, beginning to see that we can put into form all we want to do—at once, without much trouble, without much battle—we foresee clearly that the time may come when we shall have no trouble or no battle about faithful and true work for God, when the moment of temptation will be instantly followed by victory, the moment of duty's call to work by rushing acceptance of it, the moment of acceptance by instant conception of the way to do it, the moment of conception of the way to do work by immediate creation of the form in which the work will best embody itself, the moment that one work is completed by the desire of new work, because the unimaginable swiftness of doing has been so delightful, the sense of creation so intense with life, and the joy in both so perfect.

**The Rest  
which Re-  
maineth**

That is the heavenly rest—a very different idea from that to which we first looked

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Rest  
which Re-  
maineth

forward, when we did no toil, but only complained ; when we fought no battle, but lingered with the baggage in the rear. It is an idea which inspires the soul ; as unlike the idea of rest with which mockers at the faith reproach us, as the soft swiftness with which the earth spins on its axis—so swift that it seems to sleep—is unlike the same earth if we could fancy it, motionless, stranded like a hulk on the sea-beach of eternity. And that is an idea which only those can conceive who have toiled and fought with ardour, courage, and faith for years. The condition of its conception—and, therefore, the condition of its future enjoyment—is the habit of cheerful toil, the habit of eager battle, inspired and decided by the love of God. “There remaineth a rest for the people of God”—the matchless joy of love incessantly creating.

The Day of  
Judgment

We do not think of that day as a visible coming of God to judgment in all the pomp

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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and circumstance of terror and of love, nor picture as real any vast united assemblage of all the dead and living for the purpose of an eternal division into good and evil ; but we do believe in the convictions out of which these symbols, and this great image of a last day, grew into form ; we do believe in wrong being overthrown and right established, and that there is One who does these things ; we do believe that there are days of the Lord when whole nations, when we ourselves, are summoned in hours of testing or of trial before God to answer for our deeds. And these days are many. Again and again we behold them in history ; again and again we feel them in our own lives. They may take years to accomplish, but in the midst of the years there is a turning point, in which all the judgment is contained. For the most part, they come to us, as persons, quietly. No eye sees, no friend is aware of the times when, at a crisis in our life, in the vast and lonely plain of our silent soul, God sets up His throne, and we appear before Him, and

The Day of  
Judgment

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### The Day of Judgment

the books are opened before us—the books of our character, where all that we have said and done of good and ill is recorded—and on them shines the terrible and inevitable light of justice, and we are judged !

We know nothing of what may be in the heart of those most near and dear to us. Day by day we meet men and women in our home, in our business, in society, and nothing about them seems different from usual, save, perhaps, a touch of bitterness, or an unaccustomed restlessness in manner or in life. Could we but lift the veil, we should see all Heaven and Hell in contention there within, accusing, pleading, defending, the sun darkened, and the stars fallen from the Heaven of life, Heaven and Earth fled away and Time departed, and God alone there face to face with the lonely soul—the Day of the Lord come at last ; and Death and Life in its decision. I speak the very truth—who is so righteous in this congregation who does not know the days of judgment ? for again

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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and again they come, as long as men do wrong and need testing. And well it is our God does not leave us to ourselves, well it is that the trumpet sounds, and all our dead deeds arise and confront us with flame and horror in their eyes, else we might be wholly lost in evil. This is no dream, no symbol, no mere picture; it is the deepest reality of life.

**The Day of  
Judgment**

I venture to say that we have no right of any kind to keep Good Friday as a day of gloom. For, to us, it is irradiated with the light of Easter Day. When Jesus said "It is finished," and bowed His head and gave up the ghost, at that very moment He rose again. Easter had come to Him. That the Apostles only knew this afterwards makes no difference to the truth. Then and there, as we hear—"To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise"—Jesus passed into the resurrection life, inconceivably victorious, thrilled with unimaginable joy,

**The Just  
Aspect of  
Good Friday**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Just  
Aspect of  
Good Friday

at home with the rest that belongs to the creative life of God. When, then, we say to-day, "Christ is arisen," we know that He had risen immediately, that death and resurrection were together in time and in eternity. And it is better far, for purposes of spiritual life and truth, to keep them one in thought.

Did we do so, did we believe as we ought to have believed, that resurrection and death are one, that what was true of Jesus, the Son of Man, is true of all men ; that the innocent, and good of earth, those who have loved us and whom we have loved, those whose loss here we mourn, but who have fought the good fight and kept the faith, and wrought righteousness, and striven always through failure for the highest—are not dead, but alive ; not defeated, but victorious ; not in sorrow, but in rapture ; not cold in the earth, but warm in the Paradise of love ; not victims of mortal pain, but victorious in immortal joy—there would not be so much of that faithless and selfish

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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mourning which so often corrupts and degrades life, which certainly renders it so useless, and which (till we shake it off, and see our beloved in their joy) is nothing but unbelief in God, unbelief in Jesus, unbelief in the victory of the cross over death, unbelief in the rapturous revelation of Easter Day. Sorrow for the dead is natural ; so is sympathy with their pain ; so is grief for our own shortcomings to them : and we may justly weep for ourselves a little, and keep the day on which they left us in sorrow ; but we are not Christians, or only so with much unfaithfulness, unless we keep also their Easter Day with a rejoicing which grows daily in us as we live, which never ceases to thank God that they who have parted from us are alive for evermore in joy and love with Him.

**The Just  
Aspect of  
Good Friday**

There is a certain crisis in life which comes, not from the outward, but in the inward and secret privacy of the soul,

**Life's  
Crucial  
Hours**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Life's  
Crucial  
Hours

where none are present save God alone. You have been driven, or driven yourself, to a point of life where you may stay, but whence you know you ought to go on ; for on every side enemies of your ideal aims and of the work to which you have devoted your life are closing in around you. If you elect to do no more, to rest, you may be comfortable, but it will only be by abdicating your character, and handing over all your powers to the enemies of the work you have already done. If you look back with regret, or with hatred, and dwell in either, you see that darker and darker grows the sky behind. The whole landscape of the past is slowly being blotted out. Only in front of you is light in the heavens, only in steadfastly setting your face to go forward—there, where you do not wish to go—is any path open to you ; only in marching on to that which seems to be death in life, right into the jaws of suffering, is there any freedom, any reality. Stay where you are—as many do—and the



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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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uprolling darkness swallows you up; you sink to the bottom of life's ocean like a stone; not dead, indeed, but self-scorning, useless, and dishonoured. But go steadfastly on day by day towards greater trouble yet towards the light; having made up your mind to any pain rather than to stay in the darkness of ignoble repose; and though you will not escape the cross, yet, if you are faithful to the love of man in God, even to death, you may be allowed sooner or later to say, "It is finished"; and to be able to say that noble word is all a man need trouble himself about.

Life's  
Crucial  
Hours

In Christianity, knowledge of its truth arises primarily from love of its Founder, and from the embodiment in life, with self-forgetful ardour, of the loving spirit of His life. Christianity is, in one word, Christ; and to know Christ is to be His true disciple. Now in the region of the spirit, we can only truly know by love. All

The Secret of  
Christianity

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Secret of  
Christianity

other knowledge skims the surface. Love penetrates into the heart of the thing or the man. We glide over the life of an acquaintance as a boat over a lake. We enter into the life of a friend like him whose life, as is told in the Indian story, was charmed against the waters. As he plunged into the ocean and saw its wonders, so we walk amid the secrets of our friend's life, because we love him. We do not think much of the worth of an acquaintance, and our pleasure in associating with him remains a passing pleasure. But when we love a friend and find him worthy of our love, love increases, being weighted with respect ; and as love increases, knowledge of our friend deepens. We recognise the points where seeming contradictions are harmonised. We understand the crossing of the confused lines of character. We see possible nobleness where other men see actual deformity. We see how some faults are the necessary shadows of excellences. We comprehend the expressions which flit across his countenance

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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as wafts of wind which ripple into existence and die upon a lake. Every day and every experience with one we love draws us closer, makes us more interested in him, makes our knowledge of his character larger and truer. We press into his very life ; we know his soul.

**The Secret of  
Christianity**

It is so with the Christian man and Christ. Love to Him is no weak passion, no disturbing or changeable feeling. It is recognising Him as the ideal of humanity ; it is feeling Him as the rightful Master of the soul. It is claiming Him as that which we ought to be. It is devotion to His cause, because it is the cause of the race. It is flying to His words and actions in all times of life as the guides of action, and of all thought on the things of the spirit. It is being able to fall back upon Him in all difficulty or trouble, and to find in Him rest and refreshment. It is intense gratitude to Him for the revelations of God's Fatherhood and of the perfect humanity by which He has given us a certain hope. Once the faintest gleam

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Secret of Christianity** of this celestial warmth has entered into a man's soul, once, for example, any one has felt profoundly that Christ's cause is the cause of the race, the soul begins to know Him, for it has begun to love Him ; and then it is wonderful how knowledge and love rejoice to act reciprocally upon one another, each developing new additions to the other—until steadfastness in His spirit becomes the habit of the soul. The events of every day which He has touched, the small temptations, the slight troubles which we have overcome by His grace, the minute sacrifices which He has enabled us to accomplish, the little wafts of holier and purer feeling which come to us from Him ; one and all deepen our love ; and in deepening our love, slowly increase our knowledge of His character. We continue in His words and become His disciples indeed.

Then, as life goes on, the conquest of greater difficulties, and the sense of forgiveness of the past weight of sin, and the change of pain into joy, and of suffering of heart

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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into strength of spirit, are referred to Christ in our soul, and the joy of them deepens still more our love, till at last we are wholly at one with Him. And to be at one with Him is to be at one with His knowledge and His love of God the Father. So we are led, with Him, to be conscious of so intimate a communion with the Father, that it is no unreality to us to say we *know* God—not perfectly as yet, but so truly as to assure us that the time must come when we shall know even as we are known, when knowledge shall be perfect because love is perfect.

**The Secret of  
Christianity**

Age does not hope much for itself. It has attained the things youth hoped for, or it has found out their fallacy. But it keeps up, when it is an age of noble dwelling in God, hope for man and steadfast faith in man's high destiny. There is its clean, clear happiness. It lives in all the new aspiration of the world. In all the poetry,

**The Happi-  
ness of  
Old Age**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Happiness of  
Old Age

romance, dreams, and ideals of youth it sympathises and abides; for with them all it knows that God, their inner Spirit, moves.

Old age has not much to do with hope in this world for itself, but it is not so with love. Indeed, I may say that faith and hope have been changed within the old man into new powers of love. Love, within his silent soul, is his very life, the sunshine in which he waits for death. And this inner life of love passes outwards into all who touch him, and is like a summer atmosphere in which they are warmed and made happier; in which men's sorrows and pains are healed, and mercypoured on wrong, and sins covered, and quarrels atoned, and injuries forgotten. An exquisite gentleness, a mellowed justice, an inexhaustible forgiveness, ought to be the old man's heritage; and their powers proceed from him to all around him, and enter into all. This life, so lived, is like an image of God with man; and in truth it is the Spirit of the Father rising like light and life from the depths of the old

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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man's heart, and pouring itself forth into the home and the society in which he dwells. **The Happiness of Old Age**

It is almost a perfect blessedness ; and it is a wonder to think, as we look upon it, that neither youth nor manhood are the times in which the graces that are highest in humanity reach their earthly perfection. It is now, when decay and death are near, that all the best things are in flower ; love, mercy, righteousness, joy, peace, sympathy with man ; and the more perfect they are, the more they carry with them conviction of their immortality.

Then, at last, all the old man has loved and rejoiced in during his life comes back to him, not as things to be worked out, but as inward beliefs. And his heart is as fervent round them as in youth, and their joyfulness more great than when he was young. The dreams for the future of the world are even more vivid, and he sees humanity not only advancing on earth, but moving through the larger world beyond the earth. The ideals to which he aspired when young are

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Happi-  
ness of  
Old Age

transferred now from earth to heaven, and so near do they appear, that he almost seems to feel his grasp close on their reality. Still undiminished, even deepened, is the love of beauty. Even in the hour of death the face lights up with joy, thinking of the summer fields and the flying clouds and the waves of the sea. And passionate feeling, felt through all beauty, kindled when hearing of some great and noble action, brings tears to the eyes, as warm as those which filled the eyes of youth. The life and joy of God are in his heart.

So falls on him, while still he is here, the radiance of the other world. In the depths of his soul are the eagerness of youth, the strength of manhood. Nor has youth or manhood more of the fire of love than he has now, when, like the sea-king of old, he is laid at last in the bosom of the ship beneath the mast, with the golden flag flying above his head, and sent forth alone into the sea of eternity to meet God, and with Him to live for ever.



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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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The great conception of the Day of the Lord, which is found floating in various forms in all developed religions, both in the present and in the past, was fixed and completed in Christianity. The province of the revelation which God is for ever giving of Himself, through the voices of those men who rise above the level of their age, is not so much to disclose things altogether new as to reveal in their fulness, sooner by many centuries than mankind as a mass could have developed them for themselves, truths in all the spheres of human effort, and especially in the spiritual sphere. The great prophets open out to men, when the fitting time has come, the spiritual ideas, broken lights of which have gleamed in the religious thought and effort of the past. This kind of revelation takes all these broken rays, concentrates them, adds to them new light, and presenting to humanity a perfect image, says, "This is the idea after which you have dimly sought ; this is

**The Day of  
the Lord**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Day of  
the Lord**

that idea which will explain all the past spiritual phenomena related to it. It will open your eyes to that truth towards which your heart is striving. It is not a strange thing ; it is the completion of all your own past thoughts on the subject, and you will find in it those thoughts in their true relations to each other and to the truth itself." There is no great spiritual truth that has ever come home to men which does not answer to this canon; and among these truths is this doctrine (which has appeared almost since the beginning of the world in all prophetic utterances) of the day of the Lord ; the doctrine that a time will come when evil shall be wholly rooted out and all mankind united into God.

The scattered threads of this last truth Christianity took up, added to them her own, and wove them together into the web of a complete conception. There will come an hour in the eternal history of mankind when the present condition

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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in which the race lives will be closed and replaced by another. There will be then a vindication of God's ways to all the spirits which have ever streamed from Him into life. This vindication, in which all shall know and confess that God has been just and right, will necessarily produce a judgment—that is, a separation between the good and the evil. That judgment will not be final for those who are then evil, for the vindication of God's ways to man will form in their souls a new basis for education, and their redemption may be more rapid than we imagine now. And, lastly, when all the race of man is brought into union with God, the mighty army of regenerated spirits shall know that evil, which existed for the development of good in imperfect beings, is utterly annihilated.

**The Day of  
the Lord**

It is the common hope and faith in a divine future for mankind which kindles in us a common joy and activity ; and it is

**The Final  
Revelation  
of Love**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Final  
Revelation  
of Love**

the common love for One who has made that faith and hope a reality to us which binds men all over the world into a Church, and gives to that Universal Church continuance. There are, it is true, many various views concerning the extent of that in which we believe and hope, ranging from a severe exclusiveness to a universalism ; but the living spirit in the faith and hope is one spirit ; and its work in the Church slowly expands the intelligence and heart of those who limit its salvation. All of them look for a day of the Lord when they love well and truly ; and in that deep desire the Universalist and the Calvinist are at one. Beneath all difference we find brothers who believe and hope and love the same things ; wherever we go, we find fellow-labourers who labour for mankind inspired by the same expectation. Universal sympathy in hope of the day of the Lord binds the Church of God together, and every touch of communion of this kind inspires us to increase

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**The Final  
Revelation  
of Love**

and abound in love one towards another, and toward all men, that we all may be at the end presented unblamable before God by Jesus Christ.

It is a thought too infinite almost to be comprehended, that this electric force of a blessed hope should pervade the world of men, and when it has woven them into one, pass upwards to thrill through the hearts of all who have died but live again in God, to unite the past to the present humanity, and at last to complete, like the electric current itself, the circle in Christ, in whom it began. But the very infinity of the thought stirs the heart with strange power. It is these infinite thoughts, which we cannot prove but which we love, that have in all ages most moved individual and collective man. Have we never felt in some solitary hour on the hills the thrill of some thought greater than we could grasp, but which seemed for the moment to bind us and the whole universe together, sweep through our soul like a spirit? Have we never heard,

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Revelation  
of Love**

it may be only once, some phrase in music which, our inner soul being attentive, seemed to lift for an instant and then close the curtain which shrouds the light of perfect beauty that shines in unquenchable peace beneath the disorder in which we seem to live? Have we never felt, in some hour when noble passion has upraised us into something higher than ourself, not so much our own particular pain and joy, but the longing, the labour, and the passion of the whole race, embodied, concentrated, condensed within us, till self past away, and we were, for an instant, all mankind?

Yes, we have felt; we know what an infinite thought or passion is: we confess that these are the glimpses which have most told upon our life; the memory of which has kept us true to our immortality and acted on our sloth and fear like fire; the revelation of which, though wordless, proofless, has yet been the fountain light of all our day, the master light of all our seeing; we have known and felt their power. And,

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among them all there is no thought more powerful to make the soul poetic and prophetic, to lift it into the eternal, as this—that all the spirits of the dead and living are bound together in one mighty expectation of the glory of God's love which shall be revealed when the end shall come.

**The Final  
Revelation  
of Love**

To have these ideas is a great good, but the good does not remain unless they influence our life. Ideas which bear no fruit in our life are not really possessed by us, nor are we true in claiming them as ours unless we have transfused them through our life. Whatever that great day be to all mankind it comes to us one by one, fully, when we die. Death changes for us our present time-condition for a new and wider one, in which the things of God's character are the only realities. Are we ready for that? Think only what it means. It means that in that world to come, Truth, Purity, Justice, Love, and Righteousness bear undivided and unchallenged rule; it means that God *is* all these things and that we shall stand face to

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Final  
Revelation  
of Love**

face with Him. Are these things, then, dearer to us than all else? We may not be able to be wholly at union with them, but at least are we striving with all our heart towards them? Is it the foremost passion of our lives to be true, and pure, and just, and self-sacrificing? Are these the elements in which we live? are they the river on which we sail towards the sea where they are all fulfilled? If not,—if we think first of ourselves and afterwards of these things; if we prefer prosperity to truth, or the pleasantness of indifference to the difficulty of effort; if we give the mastery to the senses and the appetites, and scorn the beseeching eyes of purity; if in our life of business and work we give our hand to the numberless small unjust things which tempt us with gold or fame or social influence from the path of rectitude and honour, turning away with a light laugh or a hidden fear from the frown of Justice, whose smile was once to us, when we were young, so ex-



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quisitely fair,—how are we ready to live in a world where all that we have neglected and despised is King of kings and Lord of lords? There is no escape from the difficulty. To live with God face to face, we must have something of His character interwoven with our character; to meet Christ and to be enchanted with joy, we must have the outlines at least of His image stamped upon our hearts.

**The Final  
Revelation  
of Love**

It is true the last idea of the day of the Lord—the salvation and redemption of the lost—shall also be accomplished, and those who have recoiled from the full revelation of justice and love into the dread and death within their hearts will have their evil wrought out of them. But it will be a stern work, and there is but one way of doing it for those who have deliberately chosen evil and woven it into their character. It must be burnt out—not, of course, with the material fire that has been the symbolism

**The Re-  
demption  
of the Lost**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Re-  
demption  
of the Lost**

of inward pain, but by inward pain of some kind, by being forced into doing things that we dislike to do, by the awakening in us of horror for the past, by a hundred things that will sting us into remembrance of God and hatred of sin. Our God is a consuming fire, and will by no means spare the guilty. The very fact that He must eradicate evil out of our hearts, and that He is determined to do it, opens out to us, who know how deep sin has gone, the knowledge of suffering. How long, how long will it take to make some of us humble, penitent, patient, faithful, alive to love, alive to good ; to break the passion of pride within us, to change scorn into aspiration, cynicism into love, selfishness into sacrifice, despair into hope ?—how long we cannot tell.

Is that the only prospect we shall see when death begins to glaze our eyes ; is that far-off hope the only hope which we shall have ; is that the fitting close of an earthly life which we might have made so rich, so

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full of love and truth and God, which was ours to make noble with the nobility of Christ, and divine with imitation of His love ?

The Re-  
demption  
of the Lost

Or, do we say to ourselves now, knowing as we do know the nobler end of our being, “ I will drain every pleasure, passion, and tendency in my nature dry, know all the delight of evil, and take my chance hereafter ” ? It will be no chance. On us, who have degraded and denied all that is divine within us, the law must have its hold. That which a man sows shall he reap, and until he has reaped the harvest of evil, and not till then, can he begin to sow good seed again.

May it be otherwise with you ! Say to your soul in all humility, “ I will be worthy of my sonship to God and my heritage of immortality ; I will conquer evil ; I will subdue myself in the strength of the Spirit of my Father ; I will be a man after the image of Christ Jesus ;—not because I fear punishment or seek reward, but because I

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Re-  
demption  
of the Lost

rejoice to do Thy will, O my God, for I know Thy will is good ? ”

That should be our desire. Therefore, O Infinite Father, live in us by Thy Spirit, and quicken in us the eternal life, that we may be ready for our life and work within the heavenly places ; vindicate Thyself daily in our hearts, that we may judge ourselves, and in judging know our sin, and put it aside ; overthrow in us all evil, that we may come before Thee, at the last, unblameable in Thy perfection. We are weak, but Thou hast all the power of perfect Love ; lift us out of our feebleness into the true children. May we together, in reciprocated work, form the image of a true humanity ; in interchanging self-surrender, learn the life which is in the love of Christ, and so hasten the Day of the Lord, the fulfilment of the prayer, Thy kingdom come, by doing Thy will on earth as it is done in heaven.

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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Even if we thought that only those who **All Saints' Day** have been saintly on the earth formed a living army of rejoicing souls, and that all the rest were extinguished or re-formed in other souls, it would be an inspiriting faith; but much more is it so, when, refusing an opinion which seems to declare the incapability of Love's omnipotence, we believe that those who have not been saintly here are being made holy there; that all are led into righteousness and all established in love. Then, as we look back over the whole race, we see nothing but life passing into higher life, battle becoming victory, suffering becoming love, and death becoming life.

This is the vision of All Saints' Day, and it is a glorious sight. It is even more glorious when we think that all these are in communion one with another, and that the ground of that communion is love and righteousness, which together make saintliness. Or let me reduce the foundation to

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**All Saints'  
Day**

one thing—to love alone ; for love of God and love of man mean righteousness. In infinite diversity there is this unity ; in infinite personalities, this one master ; in that polity, whose citizens are like the sand of the sea for multitude, there is this spirit which makes them one people, with one law and one rapture.

In that communion, then, all that divides man from man on earth is as it never has been. There are no separate classes, no clashing interests, no hatreds, envies, jealousies, no desires to get the better one of another. If one star there differs from another star in glory, it is by a greater measure of the love that unites, not of the selfishness that divides. There are no castes there, with their pride or prejudices ; no privileges such as on earth are seized and kept by power, fraud, and cunning ; no Churches and sects with opinions which split up men into opponents one of another, and establish hatred instead of making charity ; no national differences ; no dis-

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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tinctions of colour or culture,—all are equal in duties, and therefore equal in rights. All are free, because all love ; all are brothers, for all are God's children. There is but one nation—the nation of mankind. A mighty revolution is that, after our modern society !

All Saints'  
Day

Are you prepared to enter that world ? Are you every hour of the day striving to live out of, and away from, the prejudices of caste, class, colour, and culture which are woven round you here ? Are you getting rid in your mind and practice of the degrading thoughts and acts which belong to the society which is based on privilege ; clearing your soul of religious intolerance, of isolating sects and Churches, of all the divisions which creeds make and perpetuate ? Are you rooting your life—beyond all the divisions of capital and labour, rich and poor, learned and unlearned—on the one and only ground on which, before God Almighty, we stand, on the foundation of our common humanity ?

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All Saints'  
Day

Then we shall not be strangers when we pass the border in that high land, nor out of place among that mighty host whose cry is this, "Man is one, as God is One." There is only one foundation of society. It is righteousness and love. And righteousness is contained in love, and all are to be made at one in it.

Immor-  
tality

If each man and all men do not continue, if all we do and feel and think and create does not bear fruit in an eternal race for ever, then six million years of human effort and passion are as much a pageant as sixty years of them. We sit out our evening in the theatre, and look on while the pageant of *The Winter's Tale* or the more passionate scenery of the sorrow and comforting of *Lear* is acted before us, and it is pleasant to look on. Our souls are freed, aroused, dilated. But we know the things themselves are a vain show, and that if we broke our heart when we went home for Cordelia's



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pain we should disquiet ourselves in vain. **Immor-**  
For the passions on the stage die as the **tal-ity**  
actors pass from the stage, and the emotions  
we have felt were not felt for the actors,  
but for our own pleasure. And if the end  
of the great drama of mankind be like the  
end of the stage-play, and all its glory,  
joy, and pain, its passions, creations, and  
work, end for ever with the passing of the  
earth, is it not a pageant too? What worth  
is it except to make pleasure or excitement  
for the gods, to free, arouse, dilate their  
minds? Is this the whole meaning of man  
and his work? God sits by, as in a theatre,  
and solaces His lonely life with the con-  
templation of our drama from age to age,  
and when the end comes, and He is thrilled  
no longer, sets to work to entertain Himself  
with the tragedy and comedy of another race  
in another world, another pageant like this  
in which we vainly live, and vainly hope,  
and vainly work. That is a picture of your  
God, you who believe in the death of man  
and yet cling to the notion of a God. I

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Immor-  
tality

wish you joy of your belief. But if you say "There is no God," the thing is still more odious, still more ghastly, still more ridiculous. For there might be some possible comfort, if we were humble enough, in thinking that we dilated the soul of some great and infinite Being who at least had power; there would be then some conceivable result for our labour and passion. It would not wholly perish; but if the whole thing is played in empty space and for no purpose—only at the end to sink into an abyss of nothingness, only to become a part of the ethereal dust—then the misery, the scorn, the loathing, with which we regard ourselves and the race, is only equalled by the folly, the falsehood, and the stupidity of the whole thing. Then, indeed, and much more than in any other way, Man walketh in a vain show and disquieteth himself in vain.

The fact is, no one believes actually in eternal death—no one acts as if he were to die for ever, or as if the race were so to die.

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## HERE AND HEREAFTER

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All our lives are consciously or unconsciously built on the hope or the conviction of our own continuance and that of man's. It is only on the theory of Immortality that man's work can be rationally explained. The other theory does not, and never can, account for more than a fraction of the facts.

## V

### *THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE*

**"God in us"** IN each of us was hidden at our birth a portion, a phase of God's conception of Man, and our business and vocation is to find out that, to realise it, and to represent it in word and work to man. In doing so we shall reveal some part of God's infinite character to our fellow-men, and such a revelation in our life will waken others to the consciousness that they also are bound to represent to man other phases of the manifold Being of God. A great work ! For to do this, to discover what we are and are born to be, and what is the divine thought in us, cannot be done without resolute toil ; but it is toil in which every step is profit. And the more we give ourselves to this kind

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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of work, the more dignified and quiet our "God in us" life will be, the less we shall be afflicted with the disease of word-making, the less our desire to talk like sounding brass and tinkling cymbals that all men may marvel, the more intense our moral hatred of saying things for the mere sake of saying them, of any talk which does not cleanly and clearly express our true inward life.

Once rooted in this idea of "God in us," we must reverence it by living it out in action, by offering our life upon its altar. This will be true teaching, though it be silent and indirect; for one cannot live an idea without indirectly impressing it on men, and awakening love, if not of the idea itself, at least of the kind of life which sacrifice to an idea creates. And to cause one soul to stir vitally, to lead one man alone out of the material into the supersensuous world of thought, to awaken in one alone that spontaneous activity which leads us from the dead letter of the talk of the lips into the living spirit of sacrifice for conceptions,

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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"God in us" is to be worthy of the divine vocation wherewith we are called.

It is good in this way for others indirectly, but it brings direct good to oneself ; our own life becomes beautiful when it is so lived ; we have a noble reverence for our own being ; nor is such reverence without humility, for it is God in us whom we reverence, and not ourselves. It gives us joy to so think and work, for then we know that our thought and work are parts of a mighty, eternal, universal thought and work ; and in that knowledge all our love is bright, all our hopes glorious, and all our faith delight. It is impossible, then, even for one fleeting instant, to distrust our immortality.

**Fatherhood  
and  
Brother-  
hood**

There is a Father in the universe, who is in the closest conceivable relation to every soul that feels, to every spirit that breathes a desire for good. This is a bond which never can be broken, and which assures

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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the salvation of all from evil. Bound up with that, of necessity, is personal immortality, continued life, and progress. Death is but a step in that progress, and in that belief its fear is conquered. Moreover, the brotherhood of the whole race, and the duties of brotherhood, are, in this common union of all with God the Father, secured and demanded. In the community of this belief is the deepest and the most natural ground of human association—the only one which is absolutely free from all national or caste limitations. This double faith in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man is bound up with Jesus, our brother, the Man who declared it in the best way, whom therefore we accept as Master on the earth; and whom we love with all our hearts, as men love the captain who is one with his soldiers, who leads them always into good, and who dies for their honour and their salvation from wrong; Jesus captain of those who cry, “One for all, all for one,

**Fatherhood  
and  
Brother-  
hood**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Fatherhood  
and  
Brother-  
hood

all over the world.” In this love of Jesus, because of His gospel of Fatherhood and Brotherhood, and of His life and death for this good news, there is a boundless fountain of the emotion without which human life is a desert. In Him the ideal of life among men was translated into work for man. And that ideal is this: Love one another even to the death; love by giving up all you have and are for the service of your brothers; love by sacrificing all your life for the sake of the great truths by which the human race advances; live to bless and not to injure men; live outside of yourself at every point; and then, when love is perfect, you will be at one with God. That is the ideal of man’s life with man.

When that is in progress in you, the noble faith will dawn upon you that this life is not all; that humanity here is but the beginning of the vast humanity beyond; that the race is to live for ever; that every personal soul, and the wondrous whole of them all, are



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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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destined in God to move forward to eternal love and joy, to deepen into more and more of perfection, to redeem all evil, to accomplish all aspiration. This is Christianity, this is Christ. Nothing can destroy it. Its forms, century after century, will perish, but it abides for ever. In it the heart of God and man are One.

Fatherhood  
and  
Brother-  
hood

What our society wants is to walk in love as Jesus walked in love. There is no common sense so profound as that which comes of losing one's self in love of man and God. There is no sobriety so great as that which arises from the consciousness that we love God and that He loves us. There is no activity so great as that which flows from our love of the great truths in whose prevalence is contained the progress of mankind. There is nothing which so clearly saves us from covetousness and the follies of the world, from the solitary vices of thought, from credulity and superstition, from im-

"Love one  
another"

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**"Love one  
another"**

pertinence and cynicism, as the worship of God as Love, and the eager following of the loving life of Jesus. One thing is needful, and only one. It is to know what this means, and to do it: "Love one another, even as I have loved you."

**Ideal Indi-  
viduality**

Every individual should be developed, and distinctly developed, in a way different from all the others, as it is natural he should, since, as in nature, so in humanity which is a part of nature, no offspring is quite the same as its parent stock. There is heredity, but always with a difference. Every man should feel himself one being, with a separate work to do in the world, and should aim at that distinct goal. But all his individual aim should also be motivated and limited by the thought of the whole state, by the duty he owes to the whole nation, and by that he owes to all mankind. It is under that law that he should develop his individuality,

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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and he will find that only under such re- **Ideal Indi-**  
straint will he develop himself with finish, **viduality**  
with nobility, and in perfectness. Without  
this girdle round his liberty, he is the victim  
of his desires, of his selfishness ; and all his  
impulses, unregulated, injure himself and  
the state he belongs to. But, so limited,  
individuality is perfected. Alas ! in the  
present social condition of England such a  
perfection is impossible. But think of such  
a State, in which every man had a clear idea  
of his own work and life, had a certain aim,  
finished himself for the attainment of that  
aim, subordinated himself, while he kept  
his own character, to others greater than  
himself ; and yet was inspired in every  
individual action by his love of the whole  
—how noble, how great, would such a  
nation be !

Men ask how they are to live for the **Living for**  
future of mankind. Stand fast for the **Mankind**  
great ideas and emotions and their causes,

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Living for  
Mankind

by whose life and victories man is great, and grows still greater. The support of these in a nation makes a nation great in thought and deed. Stand fast for justice and its doing, for truth in business and in politics, for honesty in work, for love of the oppressed and for the sacrifice of wealth to save them, for liberty, religious and civil, even to your own loss, for the common rights and the common duties of all men—stand fast for these, and fight for them to the last at home and abroad. If you only fight for them at home, you will lose them at home. Wherever freedom struggles, let your will be on its side. Wherever there is oppression, let your whole life be a protest against it. Nay, more, sacrifice yourself for these things, lay all that you have and are on their altar, and let it burn away in a clear flame to God and man. That will bless, dignify, exalt, and inspire the future. Whether your name live or not in England, your influence will.

This is the glorious and the happy life

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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a citizen may live towards the future. It is glorious, for it is in harmony with God, the source of justice, love, and liberty. It is happy, for it takes you out of yourself, out of that selfish self-consideration which is the fountain of all our woe and pain. In these great aims, and in this noble effort, you will forget yourself ; and in self-forgetfulness is joy. No life can be commonplace which is dignified by these vast conceptions, which sees not only the narrow present but the wide expanse of the future ; which lives not only for the little circle of home, but for the sweeping circle of the nation and mankind. No life can go far wrong, can be overtaken by meanness or by apathy, which abides in and pursues such work. God, in this true life, has made manifest to you that there is nothing common or unclean.

Living for  
Mankind

And when you have so lived for your own people, a more magnificent prospect opens. You have learnt, by living for a nation, to live for all mankind. You feel in touch with the heart of all humanity—its impulses

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Living for  
Mankind

are yours, its emotions beat in your breast, its thoughts kindle in you, its progress is felt in your soul. You belong to those who ride in the great chariot of human advance, and you know and feel the mighty movement of it. The air divides before your face, the swiftness burns like a passion in your spirit. And then, far off, you see the goal, where the Father of mankind has lodged perfection as reward, and in the vision is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Centralisa-  
tion and  
Individual-  
ism

The ordered orbit of the earth is the resultant of two forces—one which pulls it straight towards the most massive body in our little universe, the other which urges it to move straight away in the direction which at first it took,—forces which have been vaguely called centripetal and centrifugal. They resemble the two great forces which act in humanity—in tribes, in nations, in societies, in sects, in classes, in indi-

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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viduals,—the force which pulls them to a centre, to amalgamation, and the force which urges them to claim and secure individuality. A nation tends, not only towards union with the whole body of the human race, but also to move away from such union, and to be itself, to have its own distinct character. A man tends not only to amalgamate his life in the larger mass, to lose his individuality in the whole, but also to dart away from the whole, and to be himself; distinct from all the rest. And all bodies of men within the nation, from the smallest club or sect, up to great parties, have and obey the same tendencies. Nor does the analogy hold only on large lines. It might be developed, had I patience, or you, into the minutest matters. The ideas by which the motion of the bodies of the universe are directed and ordered seem to be identical with those by which the motions of humanity are organised and restrained.

Centralisa-  
tion and  
Individual-  
ism

The whole movement of a nation is the

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Centralisa-  
tion and  
Individual-  
ism

resultant of the force which drives it towards centralisation, and of the force which urges it and every society in it, and every person in it, towards individualism. The one pulls at right angles to the other, and the result is the movement of the nation round the central sun of the universe of will.

No mistake, then, can be greater than that made by persons who decry individualism on the one side, or centralised association on the other ; who say that the nation is saved by individuality alone, whether of persons or parties, or is saved alone by associated action in which individuality ought to be lost. If either of these views were to have their separate way, destroying the other, the nation would perish. It would either—to explain myself by my analogy—tumble headlong into the sun, and be lost in it, or rush off into space alone—

A pathless comet and a curse,  
The menace of the universe.

And if any man in his own life chooses either



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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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of these ways alone, he meets the same fate. Individuality unbalanced carries him away from the whole into an accursed and evil-doing selfishness which ruins others and himself at last. Sacrifice of his own individuality, wholly done, destroys him, in a nobler fashion, it is true, but does destroy him. He ceases to be of any use to the whole of which he forms a part. But if both are balanced in his life, he moves as the planets move in ordered dignity and use.

Centralisation and Individualism

When Christ, greatly enlarging and universalising prophetic thought, proclaimed the intimate personal connection which existed between the spirit of each man and the Spirit of God, placing each of us as it were alone in the universe with God, He intensified the consciousness of individuality. And no impulse ever given to the world and to its progress was more powerful than this intensifying of individuality to-

Individuality and Self-renunciation

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Individu-  
ality and  
Self-renun-  
ciation

wards God. It vivified a million intellects into special work. It encouraged those who had but one capability, as much as those who had a hundred, to develop themselves. It gave to each an infinite end and infinite hopes. It left none untouched. The slave, the ignorant, the neglected woman, the little child, were inspired by it to be, and to become, powers. Certain philosophies which do not believe in God are necessarily led to reject this Christian impulse, and to depreciate the individuality it secures. But the loss of power and progress its depreciation would produce is so infinite that one need not dwell on such theories. If their practice were possible, they would soon be self-condemned.

Christianity, then, insists on individuality towards God. But if that were all it insisted on, nothing but misfortune would follow. There are certain forms of Christian thought which have given themselves up to individualism of this kind alone ; and have, as in Calvinism, glorified selfishness

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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and force in God and in man, and shut out from their selected fold of individuals the rest of the race. If that were the whole Christianity had to say on this matter, it also would be self-condemned.

Individu-  
ality and  
Self-renun-  
ciation

But it is not. Christianity balances its insistence on individualism towards God by urging, and with equal force, the renunciation of self for the sake of humanity. It asks us to sacrifice, not our individuality, but its selfish aims, all that in it urges us to conquer, enslave, or deceive others for our own sake. "Give up," it cries, "your whole being, with the exception of that which links you to God, for the love of man. That sacrifice is your first duty on earth; and in it, in losing all the lower self for love's sake, you will still more strongly secure your personality in God." That teaching was the direct teaching and practice of Christ.

I hold, then, that in combining and in giving equal value to these two powers—of individuality towards God, and renunciation

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Individu- ality and Self-renun- ciation

of self towards man—Christianity established itself as the best explanation and the best philosophy of human progress. And it was started by One who Himself *was* both these powers in His life. No personality is so unique as Christ's in the whole of history. We scarcely know more than a few months of His life, but He has impressed His individuality on all of the human race who have heard His story, in a way more various than any other prophet who ever lived. And yet no one has been so acknowledged as the sacrificer of Self for the sake of man ; no one has been felt to have so lost himself in sympathy for others, in love of others. We say of Christ that He was The Man, and yet, we also say of Him that He lived and died for the cause of man ; unique in personality, unique in self-renunciation.

### The Rights of Man

If God is the Father of me because I am a man, He is also the Father of all men. That being true, the unity of the human race

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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is true. And that unity being the unity of a family under one Father, all the children are brothers. We have, then, the idea of one human race whose source is in God ; whose end is secured in God ; in which from the very beginning God has incarnated Himself ; in which He lives as inspiration ; in which He reveals Himself by a process of development in accordance with the laws under which human nature alone could exist ; in whose progress then we learn that which God is ; whose work is, as it emerges clear out of struggle and error, God's work ; whose discoveries are discoveries of God's ideas ; whose moral voice, spoken through the individual conscience and through the conscience of the whole, is God's voice ; and in which we, living each of us in his own way, are living in God. In that idea of universal humanity in God we are to live and work. Within the sphere of that idea, and subject to its demands, can we alone find the rights of man.

The Rights  
of Man

The moment we try to find our rights in

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Rights  
of Man

the midst of that idea of a vast humanity, every member of which is our brother because he is a son of God, the conception of rights changes, and instead of it, we see arise the conception of duties. We cease to think only of ourselves and we are led to subordinate our individual interests to those of the whole brotherhood. It is not rights that we insist on, but duties which we have to perform, which now fill all our view. As individuals we live to do these duties to mankind. When we have done them, we shall have our rights. Our rights will come back to us—when we have given them up for our duties—through the progress of mankind.

As men banded together, as societies, as nations, the true life is the same. A society is not to seek first its own rights, but to do what is due to man. A nation is not to seek its rights first, but to seek first what are its duties to the whole of mankind. When the duties are done, the rights will take care of themselves.

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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What are those duties? They are, in one word, the bettering of the whole of the human family, and for that end, systematic sacrifice of ourselves, based on mighty and impassionating ideas; the first and the most necessary of which is belief in God as the Father of all men, and therefore, if He is good, their eternal Father, so that all the race continues for ever; and the second of which is—that in Him the whole of mankind is one family, and each member bound in love to live and die for the rest.

**The Rights  
of Man**

The foremost of these duties is to see that every one is educated to the full growth of his powers, so that he may become a fully developed man. And to attain that it is necessary that men should be set free from every tyranny and oppression which destroys or retards their power of growth. This first duty, then, insists on the abolition of caste, of dominant classes, of the prejudices of race, of all privilege which takes from the many and gives to the few. It demands that the work of the world should

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Rights  
of Man

be fairly divided, and that the leisure which is necessary for education, and the possession of the absolute necessities of life without which a full education is impossible, should be in the hands of all. This is the main duty which in this state of society we are bound to give up our lives in order to fulfil. Stated as duty, and not as right, the manner of our effort to get it into performance will necessarily be characterised, not by selfish force or fraud, but by sacrifice of self for the ideas contained in that duty, that is, by the Spirit of Christ, whose sacrifice rested on obedience to His conception of God as the Father of the brotherhood of man.

It will then be by peaceful and resolute use of association of all those who love this duty and other duties, its natural companions, and by working together for them all as duties, that we shall grow into a better society. We shall then claim no rights, but we shall so inspire, kindle, and vitalise men with the ideas from which these social



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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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duties flow, and the ideas themselves, spread thus from the inward to the outward, will so burn in society, that the evils which now hinder the education of the whole will slowly die away. It will take a long time, but every step of the work will be secure, for it will be recognised and felt in the hearts of men to be true, loving, and just.

**The Rights  
of Man**

Let us not be betrayed into violent action through impatience. Have faith in the end. Those who sweep swiftly to a similar end by revolutions which get by force or fraud the rights of men, gain a little, but lose it almost immediately. The whole work has to be done over again. The way of love, the way of Christ, is slow, but it is the only certain righteous and enduring way to win what is due to man.

The origin of the individual is divine, the origin of the human race is divine. The progress of the individual is eternal, the progress of the race is eternal. The perfec-

**The Perfec-  
tion of  
Humanity**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Perfection of  
Humanity

tion of both is in the Divine Life of God. That is our faith. And the work men of good will have to do—between these two points of origin and end—is to organise themselves into collective labour for the good of the whole, through love of the whole, and with faith in this divine beginning, and in this divine end. Therefore we do not bid men look only to the past for inspiration of life, as many do ; nor only to the future for the inspiration of life, as others do. We bid men look at the present humanity where no vain struggle is going on, but where God and man are labouring together. There is not a single event, not a single piece of work now doing, not a single thought now thinking which is not part of God's work for the endless and perfect life of the whole of Humanity. Throw yourself into the present, with that faith burning in your heart, and be sure you will then cease to complain, cease to be hopeless, cease to be so self-tormented. The mighty movement of which you now form a conscious part, in which you

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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live, which itself lives in giant pulsations towards a still more intense life, will so exalt your whole being, that in the midst of suffering, even of martyrdom, you will possess everlasting joy. You will feel joy as you look back to the past and know that all its souls ministered to the work which is doing in the present, and still minister to it in the continued life and progress they now possess in God. You will feel joy as you look forward to the future and know that every soul in it will minister to the progress of mankind, and will be also received into God and abide in Him for ever. Past, present, and future, you will feel them all; and feel in them not the chill of death, but the rush of life; not broken lives, which came and perished, but a collective universal humanity, which is not an idea, but a living fact, of which the whole body, both in heaven and earth, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase

The Perfection of Humanity

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Perfection of  
Humanity**

of the body unto the edifying of itself in the eternal Love. That is our faith, our love, our hope, our joy. And in it both the individual man and the collective humanity are represented, satisfied, and perfected.

**The Ideal  
Life**

The great idea which is at the foundation of human life, both individual and universal, is twofold: first, there is One Holy and Loving Being from whom we all come, and in whom we are all contained, and towards more vital union with whom we are moving; and secondly, we are here to embody His character, each of us a distinct phase of it, all of us a complete representation of it—complete, that is, in the sphere of what we call humanity.

We are to work towards the fulfilment of this idea, not as mere offshoots of God, but as connected with Him by a personal tie, by the tie of children to a Father; and the children are bound to be like the

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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Father in character, to be righteous, loving, just, and true. This is the ground not only of individual life, but of all human association; for if all are children, then all are brothers—brothers bound to live and die for one another. Nor is this only a temporary association. The personal, and the associated work we do in God is to close in an eternal and undivided humanity which shall be complete in God. The whole work of the human race is finally to realise that glorious vision. In consciously feeling that, and in embodying it through belief and love of it, men find the source and end of human effort, the power, the impulse and the joy of life. In that great work we each are born and elected to do our part, men, women and children; in it, perhaps, the animals may share—more nearly and more spiritually related to us, I think, than we, in our short-sighted egotism, may imagine. God the Eternal Thought, moves in all, and does through each, or appoints to each, a portion of the labour which will at last end in the

The Ideal  
Life

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Ideal  
Life**

completion of the whole. It is this thought that binds all men into one. Each weaves into the great web of mankind, or God through him weaves into it, his own living threads ; vital consciousness runs through each ; not one is useless, not one alone, not one but subserves the good and beauty of the whole ; and each, when the whole is finished, will have the sense not only of his own little work, but also the consciousness of the work of the great whole, and in that consciousness exalted joy.

It follows from this idea, since all human labour is to be done in God, and for the welfare of the whole, that every state, profession, and work of life has its own special ideal which removes it from selfishness, and lifts it into union with God, and with mankind. Whenever that ideal is not grasped, or is violated, that condition of life becomes degraded ; it ministers to the personal debasement of the man who lives it, and to the retarding of the progress of the race of men ; and the worst of all the means of

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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violating this ideal is living any state of life wholly for oneself, for one's own increase of power, wealth or fame. The Ideal  
Life

For the main points of this ideal life in any profession, work, or business are, first, that it should be lived with the sense of God's presence in it, and nothing whatever done in it which is contrary to God's character ; and secondly, that its aim—its first and foremost aim—should be the increase of the happiness and the good of humanity ; that it should be lived with the sense of humanity in it, and that nothing whatever should be done in it which should be contrary to the true interests of the race of man. Our own personal prosperity, fame, wealth, comfort, fancies, pleasure, follies, affections, should be considered only after these objects are fulfilled in our work. And these selfish aims, when that is done, will, if we are faithful, soon slip out of consideration altogether, because we shall find our joy in not being self-contained, and our life intense in the loss

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### The Ideal Life

of self-thought. The knowledge that, in and through doing your business, you are doing God's work in a divine manner and man's work in a human manner, and that both together are in reality one work, will fill your whole life with unspeakable and uplifting joy, with that blest freedom which is deliverance from the sins, the anxieties, the meanness of the world; from the gnawing trouble, the vile passions, and the hard-hearted sins which self brings in her train. You will know the truth of life and the truth will make you free.

### Some Founda- tions of National Greatness

The foundations of a true unity are moral and ideal. No unity will last which does not rest on justice which is moral, on love which is ideal; and both, living and burning in the heart of every citizen, are elements, and foundation elements of national greatness.

Justice, in a state, does not only mean the doing away by law of actual or indirect



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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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oppression, the repression of crime, or the setting right of civil quarrels—it is not only negative. It is also the allotting to all the equal worth of their labour ; it is the keeping of the due balance between every part of the body of the nation ; it is the giving to all of a fitting share in the common needs of life ; it is the determined repair of injustice. It is a much higher thing than that which the law aims at. In fact, the law, as we have it now, does not do the justice I speak of save as against crimes. In many cases it deliberately bolsters up injustice, such long-continued injustice that those who profit by it say that to reverse it is to do injustice.

Some Foundations of National Greatness

We shall never have full national greatness in this country till we care for justice and practice justice in ways we have scarcely as yet conceived. And the first thing we have ourselves to do is to secure, in clear form, the highest possible idea of justice, and to put that idea in practice in our lives. We are to practise justice, not

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Some Foundations of  
National  
Greatness

only at home, or among our friends, or in our own special business and in its relations with our fellow-men, but also, expanding our justice, to practise it as citizens, and to advocate it as citizens. Personal life and effort of that kind will have its influence on the whole nation, and help to bring about a time when every citizen will seek to get measures through Parliament by which labour of all kinds shall receive its due, by whose rule the burdens of the State shall be borne in due proportion, and the things God has given to all shall be in the power of all to enjoy and to use for the good of all ; by which men shall be educated to do what is fair to one another, and under whose sway—lest the shield of justice should be stained by opinion, or lest its dealing should be open to suspicion—old injustices done by unjust law should be condoned and forgiven, but the innocent who have suffered by them be compensated for their suffering.

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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Yes, till a higher ideal and doing of justice exists in this nation of England, it will be always at a distance, as it is now, from greatness. Justice is the foundation of magnanimity, of great-mindedness in a nation. And the one thing which is conspicuously absent from the politics of England, from her home government, and from her great council, is magnanimity. And why? Because the motives of money and self-interest almost always sway her. There have been great exceptions, but they are rare, and they always rouse a storm of furious opposition. All the interests which will lose anything are then up in arms; and the worst thing in the opposition is, that it is carried on in the name of patriotism, of national honour, when every one who has clear eyes sees that it is a question of money which is being fought. Now, when self-interest is the ruling motive in any national business, you may be certain there will be injustice done to other nations, or to classes in the nation itself. And where

Some Found-  
ations of  
National  
Greatness

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Some Founda-  
tions of  
National  
Greatness

money rules action, and where injustice is therefore done, there will be no magnificence, no great doing in a people, no magnanimity

Freedom  
of Self-  
develop-  
ment

Freedom, for a nation consists in this, "That every citizen should have the means and opportunity of self-development in all ways which do not injure the welfare of the whole. and that what is an injury to the whole—that is, the point where the citizen is not allowed to act as he likes—should be determined by experience, and by the general assent of the people."

This is not that definition of freedom which is contained in the words, "A man may do what he likes within the law." There are many things done by means of the law or within the law, which are injurious to the welfare of the State; proved to be injurious by experience, and allowed to be hurtful to the State by general consent. Within a true freedom, a selfish man may

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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not do all that he likes to do. All his action ought to be limited by his own conscience, and if his conscience be drugged by self-interest, from without, by the primary law, "A man must not do what is harmful to the health and character of the whole nation, because in doing so he is sure to limit the development of others, and therefore sure to limit the freedom of the whole."

**Freedom  
of Self-  
develop-  
ment**

In this sense, does freedom prevail over the whole of England? Every one sees that it does not. If I wished to exaggerate, but indeed only to exaggerate a little, I might say that England is made up of two large classes, one of which has the power, and does what it likes, and the other which has but little power, and which is forced to do what the other class likes it to do. That, at least, is the relationship of the capitalists and the working men and women in town and country. The capitalists have made the laws to confirm their wealth and secure their action, and their action renders it

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Freedom  
of Self-  
develop-  
ment

impossible that large masses should be free. The workers of this country cannot grow freely, cannot act and live in a just freedom. They have neither the means nor the opportunity to develop themselves fully. And I do not think any one will deny that. The public press, philosophic writers, public opinion, the opinion of the nation in Parliament are all taken up with statements of the overwork of the poorer classes, of their inferior education, of their want of leisure for self-improvement, of their desperate struggle to gain the means of life, of their failure to get work. There is a general consent that all this is harmful to the State, and historical experience has proved that it is so. States cannot continue healthy where this condition prevails ; it is the degeneration of all the muscles of their body.

So far as this is the case, we cannot say that England is free. All its citizens have not liberty to move forward, especially in those paths of intellect, imagination.

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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knowledge, and beauty which most exalt into greatness the life of a nation. A great body of them are enslaved, fettered down to the place in which they are by circumstances which have been created by the deliberate wrong-doing, or by the indifferent neglect, of those who care for their own selfish interests more than for the interests of the whole nation. Freedom of self-development depends on the equalisation of necessities of life. I do not mean the equalisation of property, but the equalisation of the means, and of the tools—if I may use that term—by which health, which is our most valuable property, is kept, by which knowledge is won and used, by which leisure is gained for self-improvement, by which industry is able to get its just equivalent. If this country is to have free citizens, the nation ought to give to every man a fair chance. The necessities of life are not equalised; the people are not free. And, naturally, England is not as great as she is called to be.

**Freedom  
of Self-  
develop-  
ment**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Reverence  
for the Past**

It is the custom nowadays, midst of so many changes, to put aside reverence for the Past, to call it antiquated, and to treat it as rude-minded persons treat the old. No one who does that can become a noble citizen. No one who does it can grow beautifully into flower.

Such an irreverence is a folly. For we are children of the whole past, and in our blood its powers and passions flow. What we are, we are by it. We cannot get rid of our hereditary qualities, and when we despise the past, we despise a great part of ourselves. When we despise it, we leave ourselves uncultivated, and are, so far, incomplete men and women. Moreover, when we despise or take pains to crush in us a reverence for the past, it avenges itself by turning our contempt of it into evil or excessive or ugly forms—as, for example, the great audacity of Englishmen in the past becomes, in men who now despise the past, not that grand audacity



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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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which was tempered by sentiment and religion into courtesy and gentleness, but a rude impertinence, a violence for the mere sake of violence, which in loss of sentiment has become vulgar, and in loss of religion has become insensitive to reverence.

Reverence  
for the Past

Contempt of the past is not only, then, a denial of the law of heredity ; it is also a denial of our own nature. “Expel nature, and it returns with violence.” Every one knows the proverb, and well is it illustrated in a great deal of the conduct of the present day. The past character of England is in these rough and weak persons, but it appears in its false and ugly extremes.

Moreover, the despising of the past is foolish, because unless we know what we are by descent and growth, we shall not know how to act in new circumstances, so as to harmonise our new acts or theories with the genius of the nation ; so as to make them, not like things hung on the

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Reverence  
for the Past

branches of the English tree, but part of the tree itself, natural branches into which the life of the whole past will flow. It is owing to this want of knowledge of the past, owing to the contempt and carelessness of it, that so many new schemes, so many inventions for social improvement have made a great noise, and then withered into silence. They could not be fitted into the nature of the English people.

I say then—and I might give many more reasons—that no citizen, wishing to act nobly for his country in the present, or to live for her future, or to develop himself naturally and finely within the limits of her character, can despise the past. It is supreme folly. His wisdom is to know the past, and to have respect unto it.

Moreover, the temper of mind which despises what is old, or which casts it aside without distinction, is a miserable temper and, indulged, is sure to limit a man's development. To have that temper proves that the man is without imagination and

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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it prevents him from seeking for knowledge. Wordsworth is right when he says that he who feels contempt for any living thing hath faculties which he hath never used, and thought within him is in its infancy. It is the same with that type of citizen who despises the past of this country, its past manners or laws. Want of thought, unused faculties, a vulgar insensitiveness, mark the man ; the quality of his character is not capable of quick or noble growth in all directions. I do not say he does not grow at all. That would be exaggerated, but I do say he will not grow all round ; he cannot perfect himself as a citizen until he has got rid of this contempt.

Reverence  
for the Past

Great virtue—virtue in its sense of moral strength and power—will come into you when with many thoughts you look back on England's history ; and, knowing of all the great spirit which has filled her in the

Impulses  
from the  
Past

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Impulses  
from the  
Past

past, resolve that, in reverence, you will be worthy of those who kept the torch of heroism burning, and have handed it on to you. They tell you of the vocation to which you are called. Be worthy of that vocation ! The tale is noble ; and you ought to know it. What heroes we have had, what greatness of soul have they not displayed ! Heroism in battle for right and liberty ; heroism in great adventure by sea and land ; heroism in discovery, deeds of courage that no nation has excelled ; heroism in self-sacrifice ; heroism in the pursuit of knowledge beyond the flaming walls of the world ; heroism in endurance of poverty and misery, of bitter cold and burning heat ; in contempt of death ; heroism for the faith of God and the liberty of the soul. To know this history, to love it, to admire it with all the heart, is a great element in your education as a citizen. Honour the past, and make it live in you in the present.

Then, also, amid all this strife for a

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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citizen's noble life, we need a reverence and admiration for beauty, for high and pure sentiment, for sweet and tender thought, for poetic record of the passions and magnificent declaration of the truths and the aims of humanity ; so that in our hours of leisure, we may grow within in light and love and loveliness. Live then in the great literature of England. Look back twelve hundred years to its beginning, and think that you are bound up with beautiful thought and beautiful expression of it for that vast space of time. Live in the pages which record how men and women, like you, have felt and suffered, rejoiced and conquered, how always the same universal human love, pities and interests, the same natural loveliness of human nature have prevailed from generation to generation, and have never wanted a sacred poet and sanctifying prophet among us. Read, and receive the record into your soul in order that your inner life may grow into beauty, may be purged by compassion and awe from the

Impulses  
from the  
Past

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Impulses  
from the  
Past

slavery of passion, until you feel that you must live a good life as a citizen, not only in a virtuous way, but in a way which will manifest beauty and make it beautiful to men. Then you will grow in grace and graciousness, and all you do will take a beautiful form. And few things are better for a nation's life than that its citizens should not only do their duty, but do it in such a way as to charm, and soften, the world in which they live.

These are impulses that come upon us from the past. These are powers in it we should reverence, and in that reverence form our lives ; and well has all that I have said been put into noble verse by Wordsworth.

It is not to be thought of that the Flood  
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea  
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity  
Hath flowed, with pomp of waters, unwithstood—  
Roused though it be full often to a mood  
Which spurns the check of salutary bands—  
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands  
Should perish ; and to evil and good  
Be lost for ever.

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## THE FOUNDATIONS OF LIFE

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In our halls is hung  
Armoury of the invincible knights of old :  
We must be free or die who speak the tongue  
That Shakespeare spake ; the faith and morals hold  
Which Milton held. In everything we are sprung  
Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

**Impulses  
from the  
Past**

## VI

### *THE CITY OF THE SOUL*

Learning to  
do Well

THERE are many who cease to do evil, but there are not so many who learn to do well. It is not difficult sometimes, when we are tired of doing wrong, or when the wrong has brought upon us its unpleasant results, to give it up. Indeed, it may be said, with regard to many evils, that they give us up, because they have rendered us incapable of doing them any longer. But when, ceasing to do evil, we have undone in a day the pursuit of years, then emerges the real question, What is now to be done? The answer given to that question is often, "We have done enough; we are tired; let us rest. We have cleared our soul of evil; our soul is empty, swept, and garnished; we think we will sleep a little."



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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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The prophet does not leave us in that sleep. It is not enough for him that we should give up wrong. We must learn to do well; and he knew quite clearly that though we might cease evil quickly, even with little trouble, we should be very slow to gain the power of doing well. It has to be learnt, step by step, like any other science; sought for with care, perfected with labour. To rest content with giving up wrong, to let a day pass before beginning to learn to do well, was folly.

Learning to  
do Well

Jesus went further than the prophet. He describes the soul out of which a devil has been driven. It is empty, swept and garnished. It ought to be filled at once with angels—the angels of faithful and loving work—but we are tired, satisfied with our negative condition of absence of evil. Swept and garnished we remain. It is an impossible condition. We must fill the soul; it will have its interests. Give it no new ones, leave it hungering and thirsting, furnish it with no positive action of goodness,

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Learning to  
do Well

and Christ tells us the result. The evil comes back, and, with other evils, refurnishes the soul with the old stuff, and with enough of new to make the old look fresh. And the last state of that man is worse than the first.

The Pro-  
sperity of  
the Right-  
eous

The loving of truth, or, rather, the loving of God within us, sends forth, as a king his workers and warriors, all our powers into the world to labour and to battle. Fruitfulness is the result, and it is also the proof of righteousness ; as barrenness, a harvest whence chaff alone is winnowed, is the proof of unrighteousness.

When we have got to the end of our vain pursuit of pride, self-pleasure or wealth, what have we to think of, when death sits in the room with us, waiting for our breath to fail ? Why, nothing but chaff. The things within are then the only possessions, and since we have lived only for things without, we have nothing within. And we die,

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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knowing that we have trained others to the same base life, built up in our children and our society love and reverence for the things that pass away, taught them to think that chaff is corn.

The Pro-  
sperity of  
the Right-  
eous

And when we have got to the end of our sinning, which was, we thought, so pleasant, so productive, so full of life ; when we have gathered in its harvest and stored it up, thinking it corn which will feed imagination, thought, and feeling ; we find it one day a rotten heap ; chaff, which has grown corrupt, and brings the taste and power of death into our life. And, worst of all, we find that we have given chaff to others for food, and taught them to love it, to hunger for it, and never to be satisfied with it. No corn in ourselves, no corn for others ! “What fruit have ye, then, in those things whereof ye shall soon be ashamed ? The end of those things is death.”

But the loving of a truth of God in God becomes the living of it. It cannot remain

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Pro-  
sperity of  
the Right-  
eous

unproductive. It grows within us more and more by its own divine vitality. Then we are forced by its impelling power and by our love of it to sow it among men. And we have our harvest. What is it within? It is the multiplication of the truth we love and teach: twenty-fold, thirty-fold, a hundred-fold—a harvest according to law. No change of prosperity, no overthrow in this world, no pain, no mortal trouble can take that away from us. And when Death, the great thief, sits by the pillow, and the earth glides into shadow, we know that even he cannot take away *our* possessions. They belong, and we with them, to the deathless world.

Our other harvest is also made. God with us, we have sown corn among men. The truths we have lived and taught and loved have been rooted in others, and grown in their hearts. We have left our life behind us, have blessed, and are blest in blessing. He that goeth forth weeping and beareth precious seed, shall doubtless come

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

**The Prosperity of the Righteous**

This is the true prosperity of the righteous. Not worldly success ; men who do this have often died, forgotten by fame, in a garret. Sometimes they have died, like felons, on a cross. But theirs is the true success, the absolute victory. When the great Decision is made, and all the doings of this world are brought face to face with the Truth of God—then we shall all know where Power and Life have really been.

Righteousness must have a heart of love, or it ends in death. Oh, far more important than all things else to you, even than all work, is the wooing of Love into your heart. Love will need hard wooing, if you have neglected him long, and the expelling of self is difficult. But if you are convinced of your want, the want is so deep that the desire it creates is mighty, and to desire of love love comes at last. And the coming

**The Practice of Righteousness**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Practice  
of Right-  
eousness**

of love into your life is like the coming of summer on a fruitless world, and in its summer you will find out what righteousness is. There is no righteousness without love.

It is the more necessary to insist on righteousness having a heart of love because we are tempted, through conviction of our righteousness, to forgetfulness of loving-kindness. If you think you have righteousness, what is your method of living it into form, of teaching it? Is it the method of loving-kindness or not?

If you know certain truths and practise them and teach them, if you are convinced of the rightness of certain modes of action, how do you propagate them? Do you let contempt show itself in your speech or manner; are you rough or harsh with those who differ from you? Do you make them feel your sting? When we are sure we are right we are greatly tempted to do wrong to charity. It is easy then to be violent, sarcastic, harsh, to behave unseemly, to have no long-suffering, to bear nothing,

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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to believe and hope nothing for those who are wrong-headed or wrong-hearted in our eyes, to be easily provoked, to wear a haughty silence, to be rigid to the weak, stern to the erring, unforgiving to the sinner. Such a righteousness has lost love, if ever it possessed it, and it ceases to be righteousness. It is iniquity—an iniquity greater than any of the sins it reproves. Nor is it the way to propagate righteousness, right doing or right thinking. It is the way to drive men and women from it into discord and anger and misery.

**The Practice  
of Right-  
eousness**

Try the way of Jesus. He did not strive or cry, nor was His voice heard in the streets. The elements of storm were hushed and not awakened by Him. He blessed men with His very manner. He trusted them, and was gentle to them, for He loved them. And in that there was beauty for men, and rest. The weary came, and the heavy-laden. Soft words and soothing grace of love healed their heart ; and then, unangered, drawn by the magic of love, they came not

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Practice  
of Right-  
eousness**

only to love, but to righteousness. They saw righteousness, and through love they did it.

It is the only way to win the power of spreading righteousness. Give yourself to gain loving-kindness. Be tender while you are true. Answer softly those who trouble you. If you are right, why be angry for your right? It needs no walls, and no defence. It only needs to be set forth with gentleness. If you are roughly treated, make manifest the opposite of roughness. Bear, believe, and hope all things. Think not of yourself, but of love. And then you will keep righteousness in you to your exceeding joy, and with a greater joy see it flowing from you, like a river, among the hearts of men.

**" To him  
that hath  
shall be  
given "**

We may have begun the race towards union with God with difficulty, but as we put our spiritual powers into action, as we realise in shape what we can grasp of the ideal, we



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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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find to our joy that these powers are growing. Having, to us has been given. The power of loving deepens by every act of love. Subdue one sin, and our moral force to subdue others is increased. Secure one truth by passionate prayer and effort, and unexpectedly we see another, as if a new star had suddenly swum into the sky. Deepen faith by rising over some bitter trial into a higher love of God and gain one ray of light on God's character ; and the light does not increase by detached ray after ray, but grows on us like the dawn passing into morning and morning into the noonday. God does not only let us creep to Him by our unassisted strength. What we gain, He supplements ; He lifts us forward by new additions to any inward power or grace, once we are in actual possession of that power or grace by work done in its spirit.

"To him  
that hath  
shall be  
given"

This is the law. To him that hath shall be given more of what he hath. Receive it, and organise your life under its sanctions.

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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“ To him  
that hath  
shall be  
given ”

Take up your powers and gifts, learn what you can do with them, and give them form, for the love of God and man. Then you will possess them truly. You only have them when you are multiplying them, when you make them reproductive. See that your pound gains ten pounds, or five, or one. God does not ask more of our powers than they are capable of. He knows the differences among men. All He asks is some reproduction of His gift for His sake and man's, and no contentment with what you have done, no stopping to contemplate it, and to say, How well I have done that ; now I have done enough ! He will not endure that we should hide our talent. He asks incessant aspiration, that deep passion of love for the infinite Goodness and Love, which of itself drives a man to employ and shape the powers he has been given.

Then will life become divine ; and God, always giving more of what we have won,

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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will make our life happy and useful with incessant revelation. Our strength as we grow old shall be confirmed ; our inward energy reduplicated ; stores are laid up for the heavenly kingdom ; immortality is made certain by the daily increase of spiritual power as the material powers ebb away.

“To him  
that hath  
shall be  
given”

And we shall hear, when the waves of death roll solemnly towards us with the swell of many waters, a voice above the waters, sweet and strong to hush the sound of fear—the voice of our just Judge and loving Father: “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

The spiritual rewards are spiritual. They follow a strict law. As wheat produces wheat, so spiritual things produce spiritual. Their seed is in themselves. And as when wheat is sown its produce is greater than that which was sown, so also it is in the sowing and reaping of the spirit. The reward we receive is not arbitrary ; it is

The Re-  
wards of  
Right-doing

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Re-  
wards of  
Right-doing

the exact and lawful result of the fruit of the seed we have sown, and that fruit is thirty, sixty, a hundred-fold greater than what we sowed, according to the eagerness and activity of our work, and the lovingness of the temper in which we worked.

We have been bright and joyous in the trouble, difficulty and trial of our labour for noble causes, for the help and comfort of others, for the salvation of man. Our reward is that our brightness and joy increases, our inward life is irradiated by spiritual delight. We have poured out love in our labour, even when the world has turned against us. Our reward is that our capacity for loving and knowing love is infinitely developed. We have clung to truth and fought for it when men trampled upon it. Our reward is that our vision of truth is greater, our love of it more profound. We have forgiven all wrongs to us. Our reward is that our power to forgive grows till we can say with Jesus those words which ring as music in the ears of all

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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humanity. We have put our self and all its desires more and more in the background. Our reward is that we can now forget ourselves entirely, that we are no longer tormented by desires which are ignoble, that we can lose ourselves so fully in man and in nature that the whole tide of nature's beauty and of man's solemn and glorious history pour into our soul, unspoiled by one single importunate cry from our self-consciousness. But why should I go farther with these examples of the law? You will understand it clearly now. This is that which comes to us by right. This is the "whatsoever is right which we receive"; and we receive it multiplied and multiplied.

The Re-  
wards of  
Right-doing

To desire these rewards is not selfish, not ignoble. It is the most unselfish and the most noble longing of the soul. It is, in fact, the desire of the divine, the longing for loss of self in that which is perfect. To long for loss of self, to long for perfect love, cannot be a selfish longing. When

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Re-  
wards of  
Right-doing

we translate it into words of religion, these are the words that express it, "My soul is athirst for God, for the living God." "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled with righteousness." Yes, the lover of God and man has ceased to love himself.

Moreover, these are rewards which are not only unselfish to desire, but which—based as they are on eternal law—are themselves eternal. No moth or rust corrupts them. No earthly power can give them or take them away. They are independent of wealth and the fame of men. They belong to every climate and every nation. They are in the power of every class of men and women; they are as much the portion of the child as of the aged. No poverty, no misery, no persecution, no cruelty, taints their brightness or injures their nobility. Death itself is powerless before their life. They continue, in the memory of the dead, to console, to exalt, to kindle, and to help the race of men. They

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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continue in us when we have passed away from earth. We take them with us to a fairer clime, to a more pellucid air.

**The Rewards of  
Right-doing**

Whatsoever is right, according to strict law, that we receive.

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God does not change His ways; nor can He do so, when we ask anything which is equivalent to a change in them. And to believe that He is to be induced to change them by prayer is not only to have an unworthy and superstitious conception of His character, but also to make our own faith in Him at the mercy of events; to prepare its overthrow. You pray that He should send rain, or take away your trouble. The rain comes, and your trouble passes off; it happened that your prayer was in accordance with the course of things. At once you are transported with joy. "God has answered me," you cry; "now, indeed, my faith is secure; it rests on this proof of the power of prayer." But again trouble

**Misconcep-  
tion of  
Prayer**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Misconcep-  
tion of  
Prayer

comes : your child falls ill, a month of rain is ruining your crops. Again you pray, but this time your child dies, and the rain continues. "What," you cry, "is the matter now ? God is angry with me, I know not why. He has grown cruel to me. My prayer has no power. What can I do to allure His favour back to me ? Alas ! perhaps it is all a mistake, prayer is no good. Is there a God at all ? " And away your faith flies down the wind. Your faith, then, depends on God's reply being favourable to your desires ; and it could not have a weaker and more wavering ground. This is indeed to build your house of faith upon the shifting sand, and when your trouble comes, your faith falls, and terrible is the fall of it. Build it rather on the unchangeableness of God ; and let your deepest prayer be this : " Grant me to be at one with Thy order, O my Father ! Grant me to feel and know that whatever happens to me from without is in thy will, and to love thy will, whether it bring me joy or sorrow, because



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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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I know thy will is ruled by unalterable Love and Righteousness." That is to build your faith upon a rock, and from that sure resting-place the storms of life, the flood of death, the day of judgment will not make you fall.

Misconcep-  
tion of  
Prayer

We do not think that prayer changes the sequences of nature, or that it can induce God to change His nature ; but we do hold fast to it, and love its practice, as a necessity of affection and reverence, as a means of communion with God, and, through that communion, of comfort, peace, and joy. And the limits of it are marked down by the idea we now have of the character of God. That idea is based not only on what Jesus and all the prophets of the race have taught us concerning religion, but also on all that we have now learned concerning the order of the Universe—a revelation of equal force with the religious revelation, carrying with it as severe an imperative,

Communion  
with God by  
Prayer

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Communion  
with God by  
Prayer

and creating as many duties in the realm of thought, and especially in our conception of God, as the religious revelation.

We retain, then, when we pray, the revelation of God's absolute order which the natural philosopher has handed on to us from God, and we use no prayer which ignores or violates that revelation. The order of the Universe is the image of God's thought, and He does not change it. We might almost say He cannot change it, any more than He can change the laws of righteousness. But, while, in prayer, we keep before us the conception of an absolute Order, the laws of which are Ideas in the mind of God ; we also keep before us the conception of God as absolute Love, and in that conception, as it is related to us, we find the realm in which we can pray rightly, faithfully and nobly, in which we can justly claim a reply from God, and strengthen our union with Him. His love is as certain, as unchangeable as His Order ; and our power of loving brings

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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us into a natural union with the eternal Love.

Communion  
with God by  
Prayer

We believe, with Jesus, that there is an intimate spiritual relation between God and us—a relation in which thought answers to thought, and affection to affection, and which we have the right to call a personal relation, without implying that what we call our personality is an adequate image of the Nature of God. All we mean is that love in Him is the same in kind as it is in us, and goodness in Him the same in kind as it is in us, so that when we say, “Father, I have sinned against Thee,” and He answers to our heart, “My son, thou hast found Me again ; sin no more,” we know what He means, and He knows what we mean.

In such a faith there is established between God and man a vital inter-communion which is best expressed by the words Father and Child, and by all that we in the highest imaginations of the heart connect with those words. Now if we are His offspring,

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Communion  
with God by  
Prayer

we ought to care for Him, and He must care for us. I might even say, using the words with a just reverence, that there are mutual duties between us and Him. "I have the right to love Him, and He is bound to love me. We never can be finally separated. The bond that unites us is eternal, and it is a bond of love. The nature I have is a nature He has made kindred to His own, so that communion is easy and natural between us." This was the constant foundation of all the thoughts of Jesus, and it is the foundation of every Christian life. It is, therefore, the foundation of all prayer and praise.

Praise and prayer are its forms. When we are happy, when life is at its ease after storm, when fulness of human love is gained and kept, when we are thrilled by noble human act or art, when in days of glowing health or rest all nature and her beauty stream into us like music, it is natural then to praise the Lord in His holiness, to praise Him in the firmament of His power, to

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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praise Him in His noble acts and according to His excellent greatness. And if the communion of which I speak be true, the praise is as sweet in the ears of the Father as it is in the heart of the child.

Communion  
with God by  
Prayer

But there are other things in life than joy. There are hours when all life hangs in the balance, when on our choice depends the good or evil of years—hours of grave and terrible decision. There are days when our heart is broken with sorrow, or torn with doubt. There are days when the world or fierce passion cries out, “Follow me”; days, too, when we enter, solitary as a lost child, into the shadow of approaching death—days of the inner life through which we must pass alone. These are the times for an intensity of prayer.

What, then, is prayer in them? for what it is then, it is, though in less excited form, at other and less troubled hours of life. It is not based on the hope that we shall induce Him to change the course of the world for us, for then it is not His will that we want

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Communion  
with God by  
Prayer**

to realise and obey, but our own will that we want to get ; and that is not communion with Him, but severance of ourselves from Him. It is based on the certainty that He loves us like a Father ; that He will speak to our soul and strengthen it, that though the circumstances of our trouble may not change, our attitude towards those circumstances will be changed by the spiritual strength, joy, faith and communion with Him which prayer will enable us to attain and keep.

And we may say that prayer which asks and receives the spiritual power and comfort of this communion is in the course of nature. It is natural that a father should in this way help a child. It is natural for me, His child, to speak of my troubles to Him, to ask Him to abide with me through the battle, to creep to His side and to claim His love, to tell Him all my heart as a boy speaks to his father in homely trust, to express all myself in trust that He will understand. This is natural, a very outburst of humanity,

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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if He be my Father. It is the golden centre of prayer.

Communion  
with God by  
Prayer

If prayer does not change the course of nature, shall we, who believe in a God of order, avoid, in danger or in trouble, petition altogether? Are we never to make any request of this kind to God?

Prayer as  
Petition

The best answer to that question is to think of the prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. He *knew* that His petition, "that the cup should pass from Him," would not be answered. He knew even that it could only pass from Him at the price of the destruction of His work and His mission, and that He would not Himself accept the removal of the cup at that price. And yet He poured out all His wishes, all His human sorrow, all His natural shrinking from death, in that transient petition. Loving His Father, He could not help laying all the woe of His heart bare before Him. And in doing so, He won the sense of His Father's love and

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Prayer as Petition

sympathy, deeper communion with Him, sacred submission to His will, which will was love to man. “Drink the cup,” He heard in His soul; “sacrifice your life for the truth you teach, and you will bring redemption to the spirit of your brother men.” And the communion with God, the knowledge of God He won through the petition—that was the use of the petition.

Therefore I say, when those we love are dying, when we are overwhelmed with a sea of troubles, when we are in mortal danger, when nature seems bent on destroying all our work—let loose all your wishes in petition. Do the natural thing, speak out all that is in your heart. Pray for the recovery of those you love; petition for the removal of your trouble; lay everything within you before your Father whom you trust like a child; and the outpouring will make you realise His sympathy, feel your alliance with Him, grasp His love. And when these noble things are yours, you will have strength to go through the fiercest



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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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trial, and to bear the heaviest loss ; and, best of all, you will know that whatever happens is contained in His unchangeable order which must be coincident with Love and Righteousness. Not my will, which sees only darkly, as through dim glass, be done, but Thine, which sees the very truth, the absolute fitness of things for me and for all mankind. Let that be done, whatever becomes of me.

Prayer as  
Petition

But is this all that petition of this child-like, faithful nature does ? No, this is not all. There are other indirect effects which bring us blessing. The prayer, the sense of the love and of the support of God, calms the wild trouble and excitement of the soul, steadies the nerves through the steadying of the mind ; and we are, in consequence, twice as able as before to stand firm against pain and bereavement, or any tempest which is loosened upon our life. We keep our heads clear, our hearts unembittered by pain, unshaken by fear. Our intellect is awake and ready, our experience is fit for use ;

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Prayer as  
Petition**

and a soul and body in this quiet and quick condition often conquers disease both in ourselves and others by the careful and intelligent use of the powers and opportunities which nature affords us for cure. We are quicker in this temper to find out the causes and the remedies of the disease. We are at peace within, and for that reason we are intelligent without, in action and in precaution.

It is the same in the great trials of life. Everything we loved and trusted in may be overthrown, all the past destroyed, all the future filled with danger. We have laid all our misery, all our first despair, before God. "If it be possible," we cry, "let this cup pass from me." And the cup is not taken away. On the contrary, we know we must drink it to the bottom. But through our prayer we have realised God's love; we feel that He is with us—infinite strength, infinite love. And in the very midst of the storm deep peace enters our heart. "Why should I be fearful," we say, "man of little

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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faith? God is with me, and I believe I cannot be finally overthrown.” Then comes the indirect result. Courage and fortitude take up arms in our heart against the sea of troubles. We see a new life opening before us. It has to be won at the point of the sword, but the life within is stronger than any trial without us. There are mountains of difficulty, but faith in ourselves as inspired by God can remove them. All things can be beaten if we are brave and if we love; and courage and love are supreme in us, because we know now through our prayer that we are with God and God with us.

Prayer as  
Petition

We suffer so much, we are so hard-bested, that there are times when our last strength is being exhausted; and we cry out of the depths to God our Father—“Keep us from giving way, guard us in the last fierceness of the storm, hold us back from sinking into overwhelming sin, give strength to our last hold on good, let us not utterly fall away!”

“Lead us  
not into  
Tempta-  
tion”

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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“Lead us  
not into  
Tempta-  
tion”

It is the appeal of these desperate hours ; the appeal of the torn heart to one who loves us, and desires our perfection, whose strength is made perfect in our weakness ; the appeal of the drowning conscience that still holds to goodness as the sailor clings to the fragment of the wreck in the wild sea ; the appeal of one, who has sinned and escaped and is tempted afresh, for strength not to sin again, though the temptation is twice as strong as it was before ; the appeal of the spirit, in its darkness and doubt, for power to believe. This is the spirit of prayer in these dreadful hours : “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil.”

It is personal then ; it must be personal. But still it is “Lead us, deliver us,” not “Lead me, or deliver me.” And in this universalising of the prayer, in this spirit infused into it, which considers our brotherhood with others, even in the midst of our direst pain, lies hid part of the secret of victory in temptation. For the worst evil,

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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far greater than the pain, of dreadful trouble, is that it locks us up in ourselves. We are led to turn the key on all the world, to shut the windows, to sit alone with our misery in the darkness, to bid good-bye to love and pity, to tenderness and sympathy. When suffering thus hardens or isolates the heart, it does its very worst for us; and till we change, there is no escape from its evil, nor is any conquest of it possible. It is only by still loving others, and doing what we can for them, even when we seem to be unloved by God and abandoned by man, that we can keep enough life in us to win out of darkness into light.

“Lead us  
not into  
Tempta-  
tion”

Therefore when you pray, in the worst distress, think of all who, in this wide world of pain, bear the same woes that you are bearing, and give them the pity of your heart, and the prayer of your spirit. Be sorry for your brothers and sisters; let suffering make your heart more tender; do not let it isolate your life from those who are near you. Mingle with the passion

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**"Lead us  
not into  
Tempta-  
tion"**

of your petition, "Lead me not into temptation," the passion also of "Lead us not into temptation." When your soul cries out, Deliver me from evil, let it go forth beyond yourself, and cry also to God for all your fellows over all the universe, "Father, they with me, are beaten down. Deliver us from the evil." It is the first step to conquest. Your heart will soften, a strange, divine joy will enter into it, a far-off music be heard within; and though the softness is full, it is not enfeebling. Being of love, there is strength in it, salvation, hope, and final triumph.

**"Our Father  
which art in  
Heaven"**

We are to feel whenever we pray that God is our Father, and that we are His children, bound to Him in trust, in affection, in obedience, in honour, in simple and natural joyfulness of easy faith—as a child is bound to a father and mother upon earth. That is the personal foundation of all prayer, as it is the foundation of Christianity. But

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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when we pray we are not to think of God as our Father only, or the Father only of those who are good, or who believe as we do. We are to think of Him as the Father of all men and women and children over the whole earth, and in all the spiritual world; and any prayer conceived in a spirit which limits His Fatherhood is a prayer which is apart from the God of whom Jesus taught us. Our Father—and the word “our” runs through the whole of the sentences—means that we pray in the belief of the brotherhood of all men; confess that we are bound to live with men as brothers, and to feel for them and act for them as one brother feels and acts for another. And thousands of the prayers of all Churches and sects have been, for their falsehood to this thought, blown to all the winds.

“Our Father  
which art in  
Heaven”

But lest in this close relation of Father to child, and in its natural simplicity, there might grow up a sense of irreverent familiarity, and the needful awe be lessened—which ennobles character in ennobling the

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**"Our Father  
which art in  
Heaven"**

Being who is worshipped—Jesus added the words "which art in Heaven." He did not mean to localise God far away. None knew better than He that God dwelt in the heart of man, and made it Heaven where He dwelt; but He put in the phrase by which ancient men had expressed their mighty reverence, in order that His followers might still feel the spirit that best becomes the worshipper—the aspiration, the solemn reverence, the awful love, which exalt the heart, kindle the imagination, and ennoble the moral character. Love and reverence, as in the highest earthly friendship, so in the heavenly relation between God and man, are to mingle in us when we have communion with our Father.

**Religion  
and Beauty**

What is religion but the worship in all our thoughts and acts of the power which binds us all together into one: and that power is Love. In the last and highest conception of God, He is pure and all-



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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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powerful Love ; and because He is perfect Love, we must also conceive Him as the absolute source of perfect Beauty. To have that thought of God and to live wholly by it, that is religion in our inmost souls. To carry out that thought of God, and all it urges, in our relation to our fellow-men, so that in all things we promote their good and desire to give to them and bless them ; to support by our action all tenderness and pity, sympathy and graciousness, forgiveness and mercy and long-suffering—that is religion towards humanity ; and everything in theology and philanthropy, in moral conduct and in government, which does not harmonise with that, is not religion, but irreligion ; is not of use, but of damage to mankind. Doctrines true in themselves propagated in forms which injure love, become untrue and deadly to mankind ; schemes of philanthropy bound up with unforgiving acts do more harm than good to society ; moral conduct of the strictest kind, moral teaching of the austere kind,

Religion  
and Beauty

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Religion  
and Beauty**

when they are enforced without mercy, set forth with harshness, when their first object is to crush rather than to save, to insist rather than lead, to denounce rather than to forgive, are sources of greater misery and of greater harm than tongue can tell. Government and direction, from that of a family to that of a nation, which has not loving-kindness as its motive power, and which is not itself governed by tenderness, is ill government, and spoils both the family and the state. There is not beauty in these unloving things, and they are finally cast out by man. There is no religion in them; they will never idealise the soul, nor make it near to God, nor at one with man.

There is no chance of England becoming a religious nation, in the divine sense of the word, till a greater measure and a larger thought of what love means in God, and of what it means in our life with man, is poured out upon this country. But when it is, then in the affairs of the soul, in all religion, in all life, we shall have beauty,

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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the beauty of the Lord our God, overflowing all humanity. There is no beauty of any kind which has not its source in Love; there is no love of any kind which does not necessarily produce some form of beauty.

Religion  
and Beauty

If you wish to support the love of beauty and all that it truly means and gives; the gracious and tender influences that flow from it to soften, engage, interest, develop, and exalt the heart of man; the barrier that it sets up against the selfish elements of life, against the tyranny of the mere intellect, against the slavery of knowledge to wealth, against false fashion and base luxury, against cruelty and coarseness, against the want of pity and mercy in life—keep up in your children, support in all whom you know and love, reverence for the places and for the works in which the soul of man has shown its passionate feeling and embodied its noble action. Let nothing in the world, no possible self-interest, induce

The Love of  
Beauty

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Love of  
Beauty**

you to destroy or to restore one of the works of the past into which men have wrought their soul. Let no increase of wealth induce you to spoil a place where noble or beautiful deeds have been done by English folk. Establish in all, and in your own life, reverence for the lovely things of the past. Bind up with all the beauty of nature the stories of the beautiful life of men. Honour all the noble work of men with the honour of memory and of preservation. Let England be to your children a book full of brave, loving, merciful and true-hearted actions. Teach their hearts to throb and swell when they see things beautiful in themselves, by linking them to the long and passionate work and emotions of mankind. So will they never be led away by false beauty, or ever imagine that they truly love beauty, or that it is really beauty that they love, when that beauty is not bound up with duty done, with the tenderness and courage, the fortitude and love of man.

So you will keep the roots of art alive ;

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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so never will noble poetry or noble painting, noble carving, and noble music pass away from the land ; so always shall you have a people who will keep civilisation in the midst of wealth, and develop the powers of the heart along with the powers of the brain ; till both, married together, and having one life, lead upwards to the perfect man.

**The Love of  
Beauty**

There is no greater teacher than the country in spring and summer, of love and admiration, of reverence and tenderness. We know the truth of this when we send children to the country ; but again I say that opportunities for receiving these noble impressions should be given to poor children all the year round—on Saturday and Sunday, for example, as a part of public education. We have robbed the city children of their birthright in nature ; we have taken them away from her silent and powerful motherhood, and we are bound to restore them, as

**The Lessons  
of Nature in  
the Educa-  
tion of  
Children**

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Lessons  
of Nature in  
the Educa-  
tion of  
Children

far as possible, to her bosom. A great deal of the training can be given even in towns, if people cared to do it. Even though we cannot send away children often, we can, if we choose to arrange it, give them instruction in gardens, and accustom them to care for trees and flowers and clouds and the green grass. We can direct their thoughts and emotions to love of these things ; and, by our own love and admiration and by expressing it, kindle theirs ; awake not only their intelligence, but their imagination. We might make use of parks and gardens and flowers for elementary education ; we might make the training of flowers part of the work of children ; we might cover the walls of schoolrooms with pictures of nature, and talk to the children about them, and take care that when, once a year, they go down to see the real things of which they have heard and seen the images, they will look at them with seeing and loving eyes. A new or a dormant side of their nature will be stirred which

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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no reading or writing or analysis will stir ; the only side which (independent of religion, yet which is also needed for religion) will enable them, when they go out into life, to shrink with unconquerable distaste from drinking, gambling, and licentiousness—the three Furies of modern life in towns. Men call this superfluous, but there is no necessity so great as the superfluous ; there is nothing in the whole range of education so necessary for life, for its conduct, for its work, and joy, as the training of love and admiration, of the powers of reverence and the powers of the imagination.

The Lessons  
of Nature in  
the Educa-  
tion of  
Children

If you have any idea and its cause very much at heart, and get into public disturbance on its account, and are in the right on the matter, and have the power to put your opponents into an unpleasant position ; do not be too ready to take your vengeance, or to prove that you are in the right, if it be only a personal matter. Of course if your idea,

Self-Vindi-  
cation

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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### Self-Vindication

or your cause is concerned, then you are bound to set matters into a clear light ; but if this is not the case, and all you can vindicate is your own wrong ; then think, before you rush into print or into speech, whether your personal vindication is likely to damage your cause, or delay your work for your idea, or lead you to lose sight of your main object in yourself. A great deal of valuable time is lost in self-vindication. The only thing to care for is not what the world will say of you, or whether you have suffered much or wrongfully, but the idea, its work, what is best to be done for your cause, for those who are working with you, for the impersonal thing ? That is the high common-sense view of the subject, the view which will get you into the right path. The other will make a flare, but it is the feeble-minded, the foolish view. Personal vindications, jealous endeavours to prove yourself wronged, are, when one has something worth doing in hand, mere stupidities. They mark a vain and selfish character.



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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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Just praise lightens and cheers the heart. The very animals do their work better when they are praised, but there are plenty of stupid folk who deny to men and women what they give to animals. "Praise is bad," they say, "it tends to make men weak or vain." And so they use a carping criticism which is for the most part impertinence, and which, indeed, weakens the weak, and makes vain the strong. But, then, rough or cynical blame is easy, and just praise difficult, to give ; and the world is lazy. The real root of all the abuse and sneering which you see in the papers, and hear in society, about books and pictures and work, arises out of sloth of body and mind.

The Giving  
of Just  
Praise

But St. Paul, being a worker himself, understood what the Thessalonian disciples, who were hard pressed, wanted, and he gave them praise ; and when he had praised them—but not till then—he spoke of their faults. It is a simple method and a just one. But it needs carefulness and trouble

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The Giving  
of Just  
Praise

and getting to the bottom of things ; and again I say, the world is lazy.

I used to think in old days that it was best not to give praise to any one for their natural gifts, or for the natural virtues of character, but I have changed my opinion, I do not see that if a piece of work is beautifully done, or an action beautiful because of its noble virtue, that we should not say so, though the man may have found it easy. It is always good to call the beautiful beautiful, and the good good. The foolish thing is to call attention to what is ugly or bad ; it gives it a false importance, and it induces men to look at it. The proper way to disperse what is bad and ugly is to reveal and embody what is good and lovely. And just praise is one way of doing this. Moreover it does good to those we praise. If praise is justly given to a natural gift, its possessor is inspired to train it nobly and to increase its powers ; and that a genius should be encouraged by praise to perfect his gift is a good done to all mankind.

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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Praise, however, is more fully due to those who, ungifted, are toiling up-hill to acquire that which genius attains quickly ; to those who, like the Thessalonians, face to face with great temptations and hardness, are striving to be true to God and man ; to those who with little natural virtue are endeavouring with agony to subdue their vice and to rise into the spiritual life. To these give eager, fresh, and unstinted praise. I do not think that, in this sorrowful and troubled world, we give half enough praise. We are taught that God likes our praise. Why should we not then give it to man when he has deserved it ?

The Giving  
of Just  
Praise

There are those who pride themselves on their reticence of praise, or who, with amazing ignorance of human nature, think that the recipient will not like it. And they, and many of us, meet the young and eager, the old and desponding, with the same chill reserve. We never say "Well done !" And the result is that we damp the enthusiasm of the young soldier of Christ

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**The Giving  
of Just  
Praise**

and man, and lessen the good he may do the world; and we leave the Christian veteran, wearied with the long march and battle, to sob out his life on the dusty highway, when one word of brotherly praise might have been for him a spirit of brightness and hope, a radiance round his death.

**The City of  
the Soul**

This then we possess within, you and I: a city which day by day is built. Who is the builder, and on what foundations does it rest? The Senses are its gates! How are they guarded, are they fast shut against our evil enemies? The Conscience is its market-place, where all its food is weighed and sold! Of what kind are the scales used there, false or true? and in its stalls is there honesty and activity? The Reason is its House of Representatives! Who sits in the Speaker's chair, who carries the day when the parties of right and wrong divide? The Imagination sets up the palaces and gardens of the city. With

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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what pictures are they filled, who are the folk that walk therein, what are the dreams and fancies that move in its woods or wander by its streams? The faculties, desires, powers, aspirations, all the pleasures and pains of thought, the feelings, the incessant thinkings—these are its houses. Of what kind are they? Built to last for ever, secure against decay, white and pure, with all their windows open to the airs of heaven? Who has built and made it all, wonderful city that it is? Year by year, day by day, it has been wrought, and now it stands within, your very, very self. Go, walk through its streets, and think on who has built it—God, or your own wild will? And is it He who, having built it, dwells in its citadel, or that other—your own Liking—who has laid every stone of it?

The City of  
the Soul

It is easy to answer the question by asking another. "On what foundation does the city rest?" If it rest on the rock of performed righteousness, of the doing of the things which Jesus told us were the

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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The City of  
the Soul

things of God ; on strict obedience to the laws of Love, and Truth, and Purity—then God has built the city of your soul, and it will resist the earthquakes and the floods of life ; not all the sieges of evil will overthrow its walls. But if its foundations are only your own feelings undirected by righteous will, only fancies to be good or fancies to be wrong ; only your own daily desires, only shifting, changing will—then your city rests upon the sand, and walls and gates, palaces and houses, are in mortal peril. Let the rain come, and the flood and the tempest of life, and in a moment it will fall, and great will be its ruin.

Weary, weary, will then be the rebuilding ! Yet it must be done. From year to year, through many a time and times in the eternal world, you will have to clear away the ruin, to set free the ground, to lay again the foundation, so that God with you may build into nobleness that inward city.

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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Build now ; lift into lovely and noble proportions the buildings of the soul ; lay to your work the plummet of righteousness. Say to your will—Obey and know your rightful Lord ; *you* are not the architect, but you should be His master builder. Here, on this earth, so live and think that the city of the soul be divinely built for the eternal indwelling of God.

The City of  
the Soul

Many of us have known a Pentecost, and have lived since then in its power and joy. There has been a time when we have awakened to the sense that our life is aimless and our soul unsatisfied. We do not hate our work, but it has lost its savour. It seems to have no higher spirit in it than that which belongs to getting on, or getting the better of others. We are weary of the world, weary of wealth, or weary of wrong-doing. In vain we seek the food which will satisfy the hunger of the heart. We desire the better, but have no

Our Pente-  
cost

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Our Pente-  
cost

will to command it. We are fain to believe anything which would give us a foundation for life, but we are incarnate doubt and drifting. Our desires fly upwards, our thoughts remain below. We long to break with the past, but we see no path to take. We even pray, but it seems to do no good. It is a mournful, impatient, restless time. The very worst thing in it is that we can find no centre round which to group life, no tie with which to bind up dishevelled and scattered feeling, no principle under which we may range and organise a thousand thoughts. There is no ordered life anywhere, no faith, no energy. "Could we but find God," we cry, could we but conceive a great love, could we but get some ideal which we could follow and which would take us out of ourselves, could we but escape from our own inside—"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

And so we wait vainly, as we think, longing and praying. At last, how we



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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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know not, all in a moment, touched, it seems, into power by some slight incident, by what seems a chance but is not, light breaks on our life like sunrise on the sea. There is a sound, as it were, of a mighty rushing wind; the dry bones of feeling come together bone to his bone, our thoughts are marshalled under a mighty principle—the principle of Jesus that man is here to do the Father's will, and His will is that we should sacrifice ourselves for man. Our feelings are brought home to one centre; it is the love of Love, and forgetfulness of self in it. We see the righteousness of God, and we know that it means that life, work, all our being is to be harmonised with righteousness. Everything in us is alive. Our powers leap to their feet, and stand up within us, an exceeding great army, with one captain, one faith, one hope, one energy.

Our Pente-  
cost

The house of life has indeed been shaken, but it is shaken into order. The Spirit of the Lord has come upon us; and then we

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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**Our Pente-  
cost**

know what the tongues of fire mean. Our speech, our work, our acts are all on flame to fulfil that which we feel; to tell, in the doing of common duties, the love and life which is within us. Our thoughts have the quality of fire. They kindle others, they inspire, they propagate themselves. The torches that we light are taken up and handed on. We are like a city on a hill whose light cannot be hid.

And the joy we have now in conscious work, in self-forgetfulness is also like a fire. It flames upwards straight to Heaven. It seeks God from whom its lightning came. Nor does it rest in that. It consumes evil within us, it sets itself to consume evil without us, it purifies and glows. It is the Spirit of the eternal fire of God.

And when we feel it, when this Pentecost has come, there come with it two other conceptions, those which the apostles themselves possessed—the thought of immortal life, with God, the risen life of Jesus; and the thought of a perfect kingdom for mankind.

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## THE CITY OF THE SOUL

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The first is personal, the second is for Our Pente-  
cost others.

He who has thus been made alive, he who possesses in him that divine fire, has the certainty of eternal life. He cannot conceive that he should die for ever. The immortal thoughts within him, the infinite love which masters him, the joy which lifts him in triumph over the world, the union with God he feels within and knows is his—how can these perish with death? Of all impossible things, that he knows is the most impossible. He is already in God; he will be in God for ever.

Then he passes from himself to man, and in the thought thinks less of his own immortality than of the immortality of the whole. There rises before him the vision of the whole human race redeemed and righteous, happy after suffering, at peace after strife, all the children at one with the Father. And in the vision he is blest. This is the faith which grows with age; the faith which, as death draws near, makes

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## THE LIFE SUPERLATIVE

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Our Pente-  
cost

death easy ; the faith which makes hope triumphant over the sorrow of mankind, which, in deepening our love and reverence for man, deepens our love of God.

The Minor  
Key in  
Life

I have observed that many men exhaust their vitality too soon. They will go on after forty doing their duty to the end of life, but they will not advance further. They have lost joy and animation. Life for them is set into grey uniformity.

The student's holidays should be made by change of work and interests. He will escape monotony and its chill, and he will retain, even under the snows of old age, vitality, animation, power to move on, power to grasp the forelock of opportunity ; power to enliven, kindle, and interest men ; a certain gaiety and joy ; ability to shake off the weight of care, to bring brightness and keenness into dull circumstances, to keep content in common life, even to master the blows of fate.



**This book is under no circumstances to be  
taken from the Building**

[illegible]

